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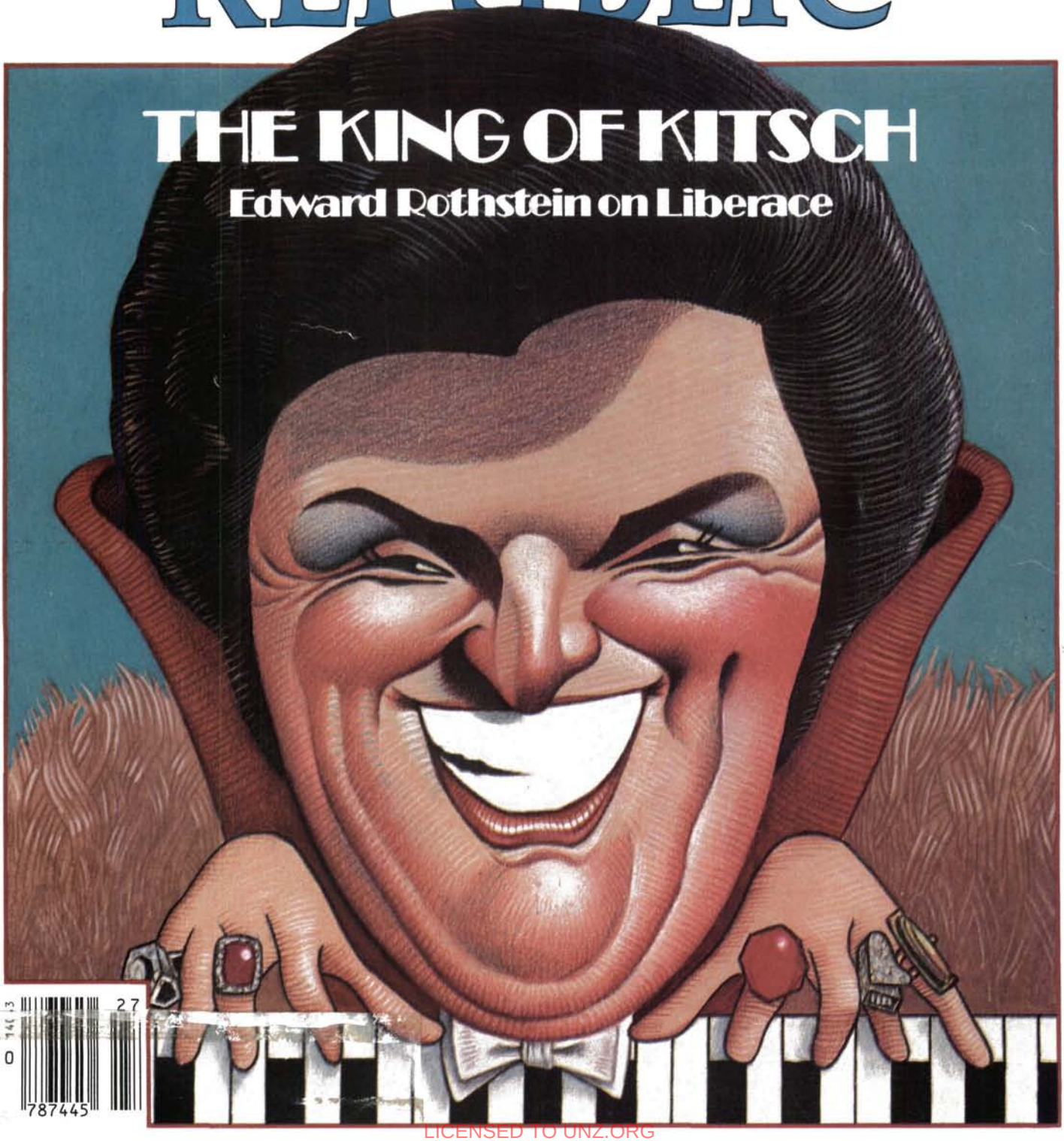
Democracy survives the Bomb, by Michael Walzer

*Mary Cunningham Finds Love • Robert F. Wagner Jr. On Jane Jacobs*

# THE NEW REPUBLIC

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# CORRESPONDENCE

## TRADE WAR

*To the editors:*

Michael Pertschuk's amusing attack on James C. Miller, chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, and his economist colleagues ("Love that Market," TNR, May 14) accused the F.T.C. of a socially destructive, albeit principled, assault on government regulation. He claims commission economists are guilty of three cardinal sins: an alleged inability to ever see the need for government intervention; a gross disregard for factual analysis; and a lack of empathy for the poor, the young, and the infirm. Let's take a look at the record.

We economists at the F.T.C. have consistently recognized that some regulation is essential to the smooth functioning of our economy and the protection of our citizens. Our approach to regulation has been in the mainstream of current economic thinking. Of course we have sought to terminate counterproductive, anticompetitive rules and regulations. But we've also tried hard to serve regulation's legitimate goal—the benefit of American consumers.

Consider merger enforcement. Mr. Pertschuk's colorful charge is that for commission economists "the anticompetitive merger remains a receding mirage, never to be encountered in real life." Not so. As Mr. Pertschuk knows, in several recent cases the commission's staff has recommended legal action to remedy potential anticompetitive concerns identified by our economists.

As to Mr. Pertschuk's assertion that we abhor reality when it conflicts with our economic models, I fear it is he who wears the ideological blinders. If there's one thing we economists have insisted upon, it is that to warrant commission law enforcement action a likelihood of consumer harm should be shown. In my opinion, past commissions have been too prone to pursue enforcement actions not firmly grounded in economic as well as legal analysis. The best evidence for this is the judgment of the courts in reviewing commission antitrust adjudications on appeal. Since 1977 the commission has lost more than 60 percent of such cases.

Mr. Pertschuk's most serious charge is that we "free market" economists would sacrifice the disadvantaged consumers (whom he claims to represent) on the altar of economist rhetoric. Again, the record speaks otherwise. In point of fact, the agency's economists have developed a statistical model to help identify creditors who discriminate against the elderly. Mr. Pertschuk also neglects to tell TNR readers that, in the past three years, this economist-oriented F.T.C. has filed as many actions under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act as the Pertschuk F.T.C. brought in the previous four years.

Moreover, contrary to the impression left by Mr. Pertschuk, both Chairman Miller and his fellow economist-commissioner, George Douglas, voted for the commission's credit rule—*after* successfully insisting on modifications to prevent hurting the very people the rule sought to protect. Economists had

*(continued on page 41)*

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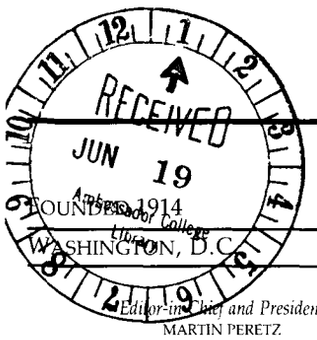


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FROM WASHINGTON

## INTELLECTUAL PORK BARREL

Back when I was a magazine editor, I tried unsuccessfully to persuade a prominent writer to conduct an experiment and write an article about it: How many times over the course of six months could he get a West German foundation to fly him to Europe for a conference? The Germans, understandably eager to reassure and characteristically literal-minded, have a wild passion for financing conferences, institutes, exchanges, fellowships, toga parties, whatever, dedicated to freedom, democracy, international understanding, Atlantic unity, and suchlike values. Much of the money, about $150 million a year, is funneled by the government itself through foundations run by the major political parties, and thence out into the ether.

In a speech to the British Parliament two years ago, President Reagan praised the West German effort, and said the United States ought to be doing more to promote democratic values around the world. Who is going to argue with that? Congress obligingly created the National Endowment for Democracy, an "independent" organization (exempt, for example, from the Freedom of Information Act) to receive government money and pass it on to private groups. Two months ago, the Endowment started doling out its first $18 million: large chunks to subsidiaries of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the Democratic and Republican Parties, and smaller bits to other groups.

All was going swimmingly, with $31 million in prospect for next year, when the House of Representatives on May 31 unexpectedly cut that down to $0. The cause seems to have been a newspaper report that the A.F.L.-C.I.O. had spent $20,000 of Endowment money in support of the victorious candidate in the May 6 presidential election in Panama. "It would be embarrassing to the United States" if this came out, said a (temporarily) secret cable from our ambassador there. Endowment officials have launched an urgent campaign around Washington to get their money back.

One document they're distributing lists some of the Endowment's proposed good works. A Washington foundation would get $50,000 to conduct a "comprehensive study" of the readership of American books in the Third World, and produce "a comprehensive package for action." The "Committee for a Community of Democracies" would get $75,000 to finance a "preliminary meeting" to "consider proposals and make recommendations" for "establishment of an International Institute" to promote democracy. This is not to be confused with another "Institute for Democracy," to be established with $249,000 a year to "conduct seminars" in Washington and (I love this) to distribute articles by "100 leading European intellectuals" to "1,000 influential media representatives." No grants to the media representatives to read these articles.

A group called "Partners of the Americas" would get $60,000 to promote "exchanges of community leaders" and other links between the nation of Chile and the state of Washington. The Andrei Sakharov Institute would get $25,000 to finance concerts in Europe by the Soviet Émigré Orchestra, and another $50,000 for a "feasibility study" for a "Center for Human Rights and Peace." A professor in Omaha, Nebraska, would get a grant to help establish a "Free Afghanistan University" in Pakistan.

The world needs more human rights and more peace. The world does not need a Center for Human Rights and Peace. Look up "Center" in the D.C. phone book if you don't believe me. A Free Afghanistan University will not produce a free Afghanistan. And giving money to the Andrei Sakharov Institute of Washington, D.C., is not the same thing as giving money to Andrei Sakharov. What we have here is a pork barrel for intellectuals. Money for study grants, for travel, for conferences, and

*continued on page 42*

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
JULY 2, 1984

# MONDALE'S TASK

The long primary season is over—at last!—and the Democratic Party has a candidate for President. There may still be one or two fire drills before the Democrats gather in San Francisco (see "Almost Inevitable," by Morton Kondracke, page 12), but once everybody files back into Moscone Center, Walter F. Mondale will almost certainly be nominated on the first ballot. To be sure, Mr. Mondale's victory has turned out to be less spectacular than originally expected, the result of a primary campaign that turned out to be more so. The cause of all this unexpectedness was Senator Gary Hart, whose fall was as dizzying as his rise. In the days after the final round of primaries, Mr. Hart made it plain that he understands that duty now requires him to refrain from words and deeds that can only damage his party's chances in November. We hope, therefore, that he will not lend himself to efforts to change the delegate selection rules retrospectively. To be sure, those rules were designed expressly to exaggerate majorities and pluralities, a perfectly legitimate goal for systems of democratic representation. But they were also designed to make sure that significant minorities have a significant voice (as Jesse Jackson's delegates will surely have in San Francisco), and also that the Democratic Party has some organic continuity and collective memory (hence the inclusion of elected officials as "super-delegates"). It wasn't the rules that kept Mr. Hart from winning—indeed, in California they turned his popular plurality into a wide delegate majority—and there's no reason to change them now.

As for Mr. Mondale, if his victory was narrow it was also unmistakable, and, in terms of personal and organizational effort, thoroughly earned. The rest he is now taking is earned, too. It seems a good moment to consider what sort of process the Democratic Party has just come through, what sort of candidate that process has produced, and what sort of campaign that candidate must now wage if he is to have a chance against President Reagan in November.

The process was at once more open and more closed than ever before, and it was mostly television that opened and closed it. The year's principal positive innovation was the series of periodic televised debates; and if the candidates seemed to have fewer worthwhile things to say than they had opportunities to say them, that does not negate the value of debates as a part of a primary campaign. The debates are now firmly established, and it's hard to imagine any future candidate achieving the nomination without participating in them. The format of the debates, however, should be changed to make them more varied and less repetitive. Why not conceive them as a series, with general discussions at the beginning and the end of the series and discussions of particular areas of public policy in between? In addition, there ought to be more opportunities for "naïve" questions. Some of this year's most interesting and revealing moments came not in any of the face-to-face debates but in the candidates' separate appearances on public television, when viewers telephoned with questions of the sort that anchormen and reporters seldom ask because they are afraid of the snickers of their peers. What books have influenced you the most? Who's the greatest man you ever met? And so on. Not least among the virtues of such questions is that they usually can't be anticipated, so the candidates are less likely to have ready-made answers based on poll data telling them what the public wants to hear.

In a small way, the debates work to counteract the tyranny of money, since they give equal exposure to the candidates of rich campaigns and poor ones. But advertising—"paid media," mostly television—has the opposite effect, and more strongly. So, paradoxically, do the rules limiting individual campaign contributions to $1,000 per person—with the result that candidates now spend far



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more time than ever before in the demeaning scramble for dollars. The limit ought to be raised by a factor of ten, if not abolished altogether.

The lamentable effects of "paid media" go well beyond the hideous impact of the thirty-second TV spot on the quality of political discourse. The cost of television advertising helped crush one candidacy after another this year. It also meant that after the TV bill was paid, campaigns had very little money left for the kind of politics that actual citizens can participate in—storefronts, leafleting, meetings, rallies, parades. The quintessential campaign event of a generation ago was the monster rally, with speeches and a cast of thousands. Today's equivalent is a candidate standing in front of a slag heap telling a man with a microphone that he's concerned about the environment, while a few aides and journalists loiter nearby. In the modern campaign, the candidate occupies himself raising money to pay for television ads, appearing in television ads, and traveling from one contrived television "visual" to another, in the hope of obtaining "free media." The citizen's role, meanwhile, is increasingly reduced to watching television. If he is especially public-spirited, he might write a check in response to a direct-mail appeal. More likely, his only moment of direct participation comes when he actually votes—and he is less and less likely to do even that. Except among black voters, galvanized by the Jesse Jackson campaign, turnout this year has been low.

The conduct of the candidates this year did little to encourage the sort of enthusiasm that might have produced greater participation. We have complained in this space about the incivility of this particular campaign ("Bicker, Bicker," April 23) and also about the irrationality of the nominating process in general ("Primary Lunacy," March 26). We won't rehearse all those complaints this time, but we're still disgruntled. This has been a campaign in which Mr. Mondale has accused Mr. Hart of being the kind of guy who probably couldn't help stumbling into a nuclear war, Mr. Hart has accused Mr. Mondale of being the sort of fellow who won't be happy until our boys are dying in Central America, and Mr. Jackson has outdone everybody by stumping the country in the company of a racist bully, Louis Farrakhan. It has not, in other words, been edifying. This is partly the candidates' fault, and partly the system's—because our system of haphazardly timed and irrationally bunched primaries tends to magnify rather than reduce the impact of the follies and passions of the moment. Rather wanly, we continue to cherish the hope that the next President will take the lead in opening up the possibility of reforming that system—perhaps as a substantive contribution to the celebration of the bicentennial of the Constitution, in 1989.

WHAT ABOUT the candidate who has emerged, soaking wet but victorious, from this shipwreck of a primary season? The campaign so far has quite thoroughly educated the public about Mr. Mondale's real and imagined shortcomings—his "negatives," in pollster jargon. We hope the other side of the story will now begin to get the attention it deserves. Mr. Mondale is in fact a candidate of considerable personal and political integrity, and a potential President of considerable ability and judgment. As the passions and divisions of the primary season fade, Mr. Mondale's "positives"—which correspond uncannily to his "negatives" and, in our view, outweigh them—will almost certainly begin to come into focus.

Is Mr. Mondale the candidate of "special interests?" Maybe, but the "special interests" allied with Mr. Mondale tend to be far more public-spirited than those lined up with Mr. Reagan. Environmentalists, civil rights groups, advocates of women's rights, trade unions, civil libertarians, and consumer groups are not the moral equivalent of, say, the asphalt lobby. They are the organizational expression of causes and values which animate liberal and moderate Democrats and which aim at a fairer, freer, and thus ultimately stronger America. For the most part, these groups do not advocate policies which favor their members at the expense of everybody else. The entire society benefits from clean air and water, safer products, expanded personal liberty, and more widespread economic opportunity. Indeed, the entire society benefits from the existence of a vigorous public life conducted by organized groups of motivated, articulate people. These "mediating" institutions have been much weakened by the quasi-plebiscitary nature of television politics. An atomized mass society—a society in which there is nothing between the individual and the nation, between what George W. S. Trow has called "the grid of intimacy and the grid of two hundred million"—is a lonely society, with the potential of becoming dangerously volatile. If Mr. Mondale's candidacy strengthens the institutions in the middle, so much the better. He need not apologize for seeking, and getting, their support.

THERE IS potentially another, little-remarked, side to Mr. Mondale's "special interest" support. To the extent that the so-called constituencies press demands that may conflict with the public interest, his long association with them puts him in a good position to ask them to hold off. In this respect Mr. Mondale is more like Mr. Reagan than he is like his old boss, Jimmy Carter. Mr. Carter, remember, came to the Presidency supposedly unencumbered by ties to the constituencies. This was going to make it easy for him to resist their entreaties and cleave to the common good. What it actually did was to make him desperately weak. He had no reserves of long-standing friendship and mutual respect to draw upon when the going got rough. Group after group simply abandoned Mr. Carter when he found himself obliged to say no to their pet programs. By contrast, Mr. Reagan was able to ask the school prayer obsessives and anti-abortionists to wait while he concentrated on passing his economic program. Mr. Mondale is in an analogous position. He likes to say, "I've fought all my life for teachers"—or workers, or blacks, or old folks. For a President Mondale, the trophy of all those fights could be political breathing space.



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But isn't Mr. Mondale too closely tied, at least, to organized labor in particular? From the standpoint of political advantage, the answer may well be yes. But from the standpoint of substantive merit, it is surely no. Mr. Mondale's alliance with the A.F.L.-C.I.O. means that he can count on the loyalty and support of the country's most powerful organized lobby for social and economic equity. The labor movement has large flaws, and some of the policies it advocates, such as domestic content legislation, do indeed deserve the "special interest" tag. Most, however, do not; and an effective coalition for progressive change without labor's enthusiastic participation is out of the question. To be sure, labor's pre-convention support of Mr. Mondale is more than just the natural outgrowth of an association that goes back to the beginning of the candidate's public career. It is also the means by which the A.F.L.-C.I.O. hopes to revitalize itself, by regaining some of the federally protected organizing tools that have rusted away during twelve years of Republican rule punctuated by the Carter interregnum. Is this a terrible thing? Is it, for Mr. Mondale, the dread price of some Faustian bargain? Of course not. We approve of the alliance, and we hope, with only a few reservations, that both sides get what they want from it.

Mr. Mondale's closeness to the A.F.L.-C.I.O. plays an especially useful role with respect to foreign policy. They do not agree on every point; for example, the A.F.L.-C.I.O. favors the MX missile and Mr. Mondale opposes it. But the labor federation, with its commitment to a strong defense and a vigorous American role in the world, anchors the Mondale candidacy against the winds of neo-isolationism that blow through the Democratic Party. It works the other way, too. Under Lane Kirkland, the A.F.L.-C.I.O. has itself edged away from the rigid cold war stance of the George Meany-Jay Lovestone era. If the federation is Mr. Mondale's anchor, Mr. Mondale is the federation's bridge—to the nuclear freeze movement and to opponents of U.S. policy in Central America, for example. So in foreign policy, too, the relationship is good for both participants—and good, we think, for the country.

IS Mr. Mondale too cautious? Maybe. But a certain caution is far from unwelcome in a world bristling with what Mr. Mondale calls "those godawful nuclear weapons." The "positive" side of his famous caution is that he is careful. He builds meticulously; he seldom makes egregious mistakes; when he moves, he feels for firm ground with each step. The disciplined campaign organization he had built provided him with a firebreak when the Hart flames raged; it saved his candidacy. A Mondale Administration might have firebreaks, too. There are worse sins than prudence, more alarming qualities than mindfulness, scarier habits than the habit of foresight.

But isn't he an old face? And isn't he too closely associated with Mr. Carter? In fact, Mr. Mondale, at 56, is on the young side for a Presidential nominee. He is a full generation—Hartian word!—younger than the incumbent. (He will not be Mr. Reagan's age until the year 2001.) Yet if he wins, he will be the best-prepared President since Lyndon Johnson. "Walter Mondale held high public offices for twenty continuous years from 1960 to 1980," wrote David Harris in *The New York Times Magazine* last June. "The twelve years spent in the Senate have left him completely familiar with the legislative process. His four as Vice President are generally agreed to have included more direct and influential involvement in the daily workings of the executive branch than any Vice President in history." Mr. Mondale's breadth of experience would be an enormous asset to him as President if not as a candidate. His association with Mr. Carter is no doubt a political debit, but it left him uniquely equipped to learn from Mr. Carter's mistakes.

STILL, Mr. Mondale comes out of the primary season in a dangerously weak condition. For the three months between New Hampshire and California his campaign consisted almost exclusively of unremitting attacks on Mr. Hart; it was barren of what political consultants call "a positive message." Mr. Hart's voters—6.42 million as against Mr. Mondale's 6.87 million—are unhappy with the winner, as are independent voters generally. They tend to see Mr. Mondale as the Hart campaign painted him: a shrill, desiccated old hack in big labor's pocket, promising everything to everybody but committed only to restoring the status quo ante.

Mr. Mondale can comfort himself that he has nowhere to go but up. What kind of campaign must he run if he is to have a chance to win? The answer is that he is going to have to take a leaf from Mr. Hart's book and make the issue the future. If the issue becomes Mr. Reagan's 1980 question—"Are you better off than you were four years ago?"—Mr. Reagan wins, because unemployment is no higher than it was when he came in, inflation is down, and the middle class has had its income taxes cut. Only if the focus of debate can be shifted to the *direction* of the country does Mr. Mondale stand a chance.

Mr. Reagan has no real agenda or vision for the second term he is asking the voters to give him. His rationale is that because people feel better than they did four years ago ("It's morning in America!" goes the commercial), he deserves to be reelected as a reward for boosting national morale. His recipe for the next four years is simply more of what he has given us during the last four. His domestic policy can be summarized in a single word: cut. Cut taxes, cut regulation, cut social spending. His foreign policy is slightly more complex: build and bash. Build armaments and bash the Russians, rhetorically above all. Neither policy holds out much hope for the future.

This is not to say that Mr. Reagan has accomplished nothing. There is no doubt that the American people wanted to reverse the perceived decline in U.S. military strength, wanted to end the humiliations of the United States abroad, wanted to scale back supposedly wasteful social programs. Mr. Reagan has done these things, and Mr. Mondale can only damage his own credibility by denying it. He cannot argue that Mr. Reagan has done



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nothing, or nothing but mischief. He cannot win on a slogan like "I'll fire everybody he's hired and hire everybody he's fired," with its implication that everything would be just jim dandy—or jimmy dandy—if we could only turn the clock back to January 19, 1981. Nobody wants to go back. Mr. Mondale must argue instead that it's time now for a change—not a reversal—in course. Perhaps Mr. Reagan's policies, up to a point, were a needed corrective. But they have already gone too far, and a continuation of them for four more years will dissipate the gains, compound the damage, and put the future at risk.

OF COURSE, some Reagan policies have simply been wrong. There is a recovery, but it has nothing to do with supply-side economics. It is a classic Keynesian recovery fueled by demand—much of which is for imported goods. The present feels good, but the future looks ominous.

So Mr. Mondale is going to have to run a campaign that is both educational and future-oriented. His task is far more complicated than Mr. Reagan's. He has to explain to people that though the recovery may feel good now, a reckoning is coming. The prospect of $200 billion deficits as far as the eye can see, in good times and bad, is the direct result of the President's fiscal policies, and it is a dangerous prospect indeed. Contrary to the moral and policy premise of Reaganomics, the well-off have not, by and large, used their tax cut money for productive investment. It has gone instead for consumption and speculation. Good jobs aren't being created, except in the export industries of Europe and Japan. The industrial Midwest is still in depression, and if there's another downturn the country will be defenseless because the Reagan Administration has eaten the countercyclical seed corn. Mr. Mondale must explain that for most people, overall taxes have *not* been cut. The net effect of Mr. Reagan's tax, spending, and borrowing policies has been to create an enormous income transfer program from working taxpayers and the welfare poor to the coupon-clipping rich.

More broadly, Mr. Mondale has to ask the country to consider the consequences of continuing to exacerbate the polarization between rich and poor and between black and white; continuing to gut environmental protection, child nutrition, education, science, and research and development; continuing to hack away at the regulatory protections that guard ordinary citizens from the carelessness and rapaciousness of market power. Again, he must stress that it is no longer a question of curbing government excesses. That has been done. The question now is the future.

While assuring the country that the restoration of American military strength will continue—although at a level the Pentagon is capable of absorbing—Mr. Mondale must point to the Reagan Administration's chronic inability to use diplomatic tools as well as military ones. This is especially true in the area of nuclear arms control, where Mr. Reagan's stewardship has coincided with a complete collapse of negotiations—a collapse that cannot be blamed exclusively on the Russians. The Administration has been paralyzed by an apparently hopeless internal standoff between hard-liners and ultra-hard-liners among its arms control policymakers. Meanwhile, the technology barrels ahead, creating conditions in which arms control will be increasingly difficult even for an Adminstration that has the political will to pursue it seriously.

In short, Mr. Mondale must get the public to look beyond the animal comforts of the present to the risks down the road. This would be "negative campaigning" of a high order, since it involves the use of speculative reason. But an attack on Mr. Reagan will not suffice. Mr. Reagan is a man of ideology, and Mr. Mondale cannot defeat him by going into combat ideologically unarmed. He must be explicit about his first principles, just as Mr. Reagan is; and he must locate those first principles squarely in the tradition of American patriotic feeling. The great weakness in Mr. Reagan's free-market, social-Darwinist, anti-government ideology is that it is hostile to the idea of the nation as an actor in shaping its own destiny—or in doing anything at all, except maybe invading Grenada. The premise of Reaganism is that the country cannot do anything for itself, that the task of national renewal must be left to a small class of wealthy investors who alone are competent to carry it out. Mr. Mondale has an ampler, more audacious idea of the nation. He must express that idea—that ideology—and hammer it home. Gary Hart may have lost the nomination, but he was on to something: now it is Mr. Mondale who must become the candidate of the national idea and of the future. If he allows himself to be seen as the candidate of interests only, he will surely lose.

For Mr. Mondale to run this sort of campaign would mean some fairly large changes in the political and thematic approach he has followed up until now. But they are changes he can make without violence to his own values and beliefs. We can only hope he has learned from the experience he has just been through, and there are some signs he understands what is required. "The only issue that counts," he said in a speech at the University of Cincinnati on April 19, is "our future. . . . We must choose a leader with his eyes on the next century." We will begin to learn during the next few weeks whether Walter Mondale can be that leader.

## NOTEBOOK

□ NO ONE SEEMS to know how to respond to the vast death happenings perpetrated by Indira Gandhi's soldiers in the Punjab this month. We do understand that the Sikh terrorists who had barricaded themselves in the Golden Temple deserved no mercy; terrorists never do. But this hardly justifies the wildly indiscriminate killings and the even more indiscriminate arrests and deten-



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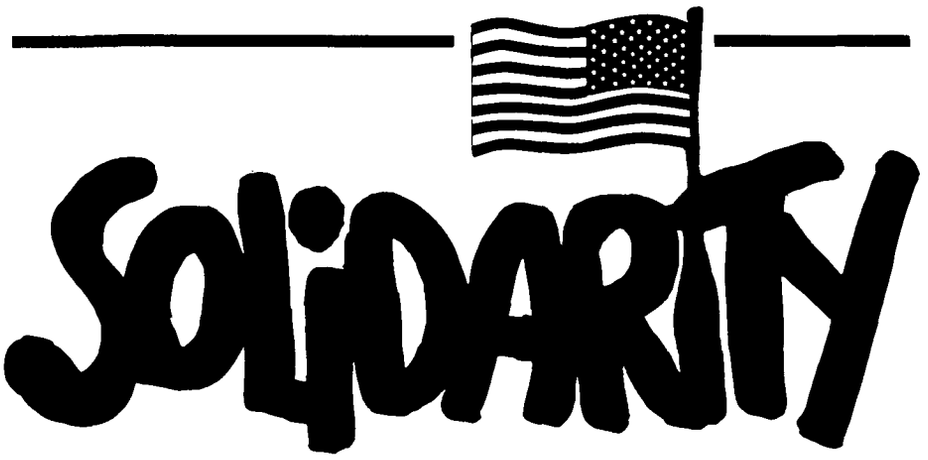


AMERICAN UNIONS are under attack — more than at any time since the great organizing drives of the Thirties.

Employers are not simply fighting workers on issues of wages and hours. They are threatening wholesale firings, strikebreaking, trying to win contracts where new workers no longer have the same rights as those already employed.

For the first time in half a century there is a real possibility of the de-unionization of America.

We are against that trend. We are in solidarity with the unions of this country in their fight for existence.

None of us is an official or staff member of a union. Some of us belong to unions; others do not. All of us have had our criticisms of labor in the past and even the present — and all of us believe that those criticisms must now take second place to our expression of solidarity in Ronald Reagan's increasingly anti-union America.

We believe in unions, not simply as a means of the struggle for a better economic life, but as the basis for human dignity. We believe that an American economy which achieves an "equilibrium" through chronic high unemployment and low wages is preparing the way for an economic crisis in which the society is too poor to buy its own output. That will strike, not only at the union worker, but at practically every member of the society.

Above all, we recognize a moral claim upon our conscience when the working men and women of this country ask our help. We are, all of us, in solidarity with the magnificent struggle of the Polish workers for trade union rights; we are in solidarity with the black workers of South Africa in their battle against economic and social *apartheid*; **and** we are in solidarity with American workers. Support for unions does not begin only at a foreign border.

In this spirit we invite our fellow citizens and their organizations to take this pledge of American Solidarity:

- Whenever we see a picket line of workers engaged in economic struggle, we recognize it as a legitimate claim upon our conscience and we will do all that we can to honor it.
- Whenever we see a corporation engaged in strikebreaking or other forms of anti-union activity, we pledge to consider not buying its products or using its services.
- Whenever the issue of labor law reform is once again placed upon the agenda, making the law an instrument of the worker's right to organize rather than, as so often today, a bureaucratic weapon against that right, we will support the reform effort. In doing so, we are particularly mindful that the benefits of unionism must be brought to the vast mass of the unorganized, many of whom are low paid, members of minority groups, and women.

In the struggle for the unions' right to exist we pledge our moral and practical solidarity.

---

**Hon. Bella S. Abzug; Gordon Adams,** Defense Budget Project; **Rep. Joseph P. Addabbo; Shana Alexander; Virginia M. Apuzzo,** National Gay Task Force; **Stanley Aronowitz***, *Social Text*; **John Atlas,** N.J. Tenant Organization; **Joan Baez; Hon. Frank Barbaro,** N.Y. State Assembly; **Richard J. Barnet,** Institute for Policy Studies; **Rosalyn Baxandall; Algernon D. Black,** American Ethical Union; **Julian Bond,** Georgia State Senate; **Heather Booth,** Midwest Academy; **Rabbi Balfour Brickner***; **Harry Britt***, San Francisco City Supervisor, **Stephen Brobeck,** Consumer Federation of America; **Rep. Sala Burton; Martin Carnoy,** Stanford; **Gene Carroll,** Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign; **Noam Chomsky,** MIT; **David Clarenbach,** Wisconsin State Assembly; **Richard A. Cloward,** Columbia; **Rev. John Collins,** Clergy and Laity Concerned; **Mary Jean Collins,** National Organization for Women; **Barry Commoner,** Queens College; **Hon. Martin Connor,** N.Y. 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tion of thousands of Sikh separatists who are not terrorists or guerrillas at all. It increasingly appears that the problem of India may be like that of Lebanon and of other Third World jurisdictions: there are millions of people in the country who do not think of themselves as Indians. And it is not only the Sikhs who demand some sort of self-determination, not only they to whose plaints Mrs. Gandhi has been cruelly deaf. Her hearing, however, is sometimes more acute. She has heard the voice, for example, of the Palestinians, and has made a habit of giving Yasir Arafat a stage and of lecturing the Israelis about the rights of a people rather less historically defined than some of the ancient ethnic groups and distinctive sects that want out from under her rule and New Delhi's. The iron lady's hypocrisy on the political rights of minorities now haunts her as she is driven to ever more draconian measures to bolster a national idea which is being eroded by self-destructive brutalities.

□ OUT OF THE WASHINGTON media world this week, two developments of note. Development No. 1: *The Washington Weekly*—a paper launched by NEW REPUBLIC principals (see "Washington Diarist," page 43), plus Joan Bingham of the Louisville *Courier-Journal* clan, Mortimer Zuckerman of *The Atlantic*, and a small group of other investors, and edited by Jeff Stein—made its first appearance. It is not supposed to have the high serious character of either TNR or *The Atlantic*. But readers of these magazines, living in Washington and away from it, will find *The Weekly* an entertaining and provocative guide to—and record of—life in the capital. Subscriptions may be had at $20 for one year from P.O. Box 990, Farmingdale, New York 11737. Development No. 2: After a long and complex bidding war in which the same NEW REPUBLIC principals participated (and lost), the stewardship of *U.S. News and World Report* was won by the same Mortimer Zuckerman, our partner in *The Weekly*. (Capitalism is not so rapacious that competitors don't remain friends and colleagues.) Why were we interested in *U.S. News*, some of you may ask? As a business investment, first of all. But those of you who ask probably haven't seen the magazine in years. It is not the hard right journal of its historic reputation; indeed, if there is a genuinely objective news weekly in the country today, it's *U.S. News*. The magazine is long on information and short on fluff—the precise opposite of trendy. (Anyway, trendiness is no longer chic.) *U.S. News* is Mr. Zuckerman's responsibility now; and we can scarcely think of anyone more appropriate to the role. Mr. Zuckerman is imaginative and energetic; just take a look at how he has revived the formerly torpid *Atlantic*. To these two enterprises, one altogether new, the other about to be reinvigorated, *"l'envoi!"*

□ CUI BONO? was the question asked almost immediately after Pope John Paul II was shot in St. Peter's Square on May 13, 1981. An answer immediately suggested itself: the Soviet Union. This Pope had many divisions, at least in Poland, where the most dramatic challenge to the Soviet empire was being made; Yuri Andropov had, as the dicks say, a motive. This suggestion was ridiculed in many quarters as a bizarre symptom of paranoid anticommunism. Incredulity, it was said, was the proper critical response. Then the Italian police went to work. The investigation took three years, and produced 25,000 pages of documentation. These pages have now been summarized in a 78-page report by an Italian state prosecutor, and this has been summarized by Claire Sterling, who was widely abused for her own investigation into the plot against the Pope, in *The New York Times* of June 10. The prosecutor has concluded that the assassin was recruited by the Bulgarian secret police for the purpose of weakening Solidarity in Poland. His report asks for nine indictments, of three Bulgarians and six Turks. Next month Judge Illario Martella, who has been directing the Italian inquiry, will release his own report, which is said not to differ at all from the prosecutor's. So it was not paranoid anticommunism after all. The analysis according to the Soviet connection, it turns out, was a correct response to reality—a correct reading of the lawless lengths to which the Soviet Union will go to ensure its imperialism. Claire Sterling and others are owed many apologies.

□ TWENTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "As this issue of THE NEW REPUBLIC went to press it was not known whether the three civil rights workers who disappeared in Mississippi on June 21 had been murdered. The presumption seemed reasonable. If they are dead, they are not the first nor are they likely to be the last to die for this cause in this state. White residents of the small Mississippi town of Philadelphia talk of 'slitting throats' and 'shooting 'em down in the streets.' Such violence is not confined to 'extremists'; it is practiced by elected and appointed officials, particularly police officials. Spontaneous police attacks on 'agitators,' black and white, as well as 'uppity' Negroes, followed in many cases by arrests on fraudulent charges, more beatings while awaiting arraignment (often by other prisoners, egged on by jailers), trials and conviction based on perjured evidence or no evidence—all this has become almost a matter of course. It is no exaggeration to say that law and order, taken for granted by most people in most of white America, has ceased to have meaning for those who live in Mississippi and do not accept the extreme segregationist position. The supreme law of Mississippi is not what was written by the Founding Fathers in the Constitution, or by the U.S. Congress in federal statutes, or even by the legislators of Mississippi; it is what local cops and local vigilantes ordain. It is gang law, the law of fear—fear of shots in the dark, of arrest on some unpredictable charge, of a job lost or a mortgage foreclosed. Those who have come to know this fear firsthand feel that in many respects Mississippi is comparable to Germany in the 1930s." (The Editors, "Mississippi," July 4, 1964).



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This is a practical, easy-to-learn program that will work for you—no matter how slow a reader you think you are now. The *Speed Learning Program* is scientifically planned to get you started quickly . . . to help you in spare minutes a day. It brings you a "teacher-on-cassettes" who guides you, instructs, encourages you, explaining material as you read. Interesting items taken from *Time* Magazine, *Business Week, Wall Street Journal, Family Circle, N.Y. Times* and many others, make the program stimulating, easy and fun . . . and so much more effective.

Executives, students, professional people, men and women in all walks of life from 15 to 70 have benefited from this program. Speed Learning is a fully accredited course . . . costing only 1/5 the price of less effective speed reading classroom courses. Now you can examine the same, easy, practical and proven methods at home . . . in spare time . . . without risking a penny.

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# ALMOST INEVITABLE

HEAVEN HELP US, this thing is not over yet. For at least the third time in the long, miserable Democratic Presidential race, Walter Mondale's nomination ought to be inevitable, and Mondale and his people are saying it is. But it isn't. It should have been inevitable after Iowa, when Mondale seemed to have everything that a contender could want—endorsements, poll ratings, money, organization, experience, and momentum—but he lacked fire, and in New England he very nearly lost his chance to be nominated. Well, he acquired some fire in the South, and when Gary Hart lost his luster in Illinois, New York, and Pennsylvania, Mondale should have become inevitable again; but Ohio and Indiana proved he wasn't. Now that the primary season is over, Mondale has more delegates committed to him than the 1,967 needed to win the nomination, but still it isn't quite his.

Once again, almost everything that you can write on paper or extrapolate from the current state of affairs suggests that when Democratic National Convention delegates cast their ballots for President on July 18, Mondale will be the winner. The latest UPI count of delegates shows Mondale with 1,989, Hart behind by 760 with 1,229, Jesse Jackson with 371, other candidates with 58, and 201 still uncommitted. Mondale's own delegate-counters say that UPI is too conservative and that Mondale actually has 2,015 to Hart's 1,219 and Jackson's 363. As one would expect of the ultimate organization candidacy, Mondale's boiler-room operation is first class—headed by the same team of Tom Donilon, Elaine Kamarck, and Tony Corrado that successfully tracked and cadged delegates for Jimmy Carter in 1980. Hart's operation is headed by Carol Casey, who did the same work for Edward Kennedy in 1980, but even some Hart strategists admit that Hart lacked the organizational discipline to follow up on his primary victories by establishing a delegate tracking operation early enough.

By knowing each state's delegate-selection rules thoroughly, by being represented in force at district caucuses and state conventions, and by maintaining constant contact with uncommitted and at-large delegates, the Mondale campaign has managed to maximize its delegate count practically everywhere. So, even though Hart won the New Hampshire primary, Mondale may yet have a majority of the state's twenty-two delegates when the convention meets. Hart won the Florida primary, but Mondale's current delegate count shows Mondale ahead with seventy-three to Hart's fifty-one, and nineteen still up for grabs. Hart won the first round of Alaska caucuses on March 15, but Mondale's counters now say that Mondale leads Hart by nine delegates to four.

Mondale has been especially successful among the 568 unpledged or "super" delegates provided for in this year's rules (which Mondale helped write), who include 164 House members, 25 Senators, governors, mayors, and state party officials. These are high-visibility professionals whose commitment to a candidate can create a sense of momentum when it's needed. A week before Mondale's victory in New Jersey and defeat in California, the Mondale camp figured it had 246 of the 568 in hand to Hart's 28, including 112 members of Congress to Hart's 11. When Mondale made his vow to be over the 1,967 mark by 11:59 A.M. on June 6, it was from the unpledged that Mondale's people got the final 40 votes. As of last week, the Mondale people were counting 329 "unpledged" delegates for Mondale and only 35 for Hart.

Independent of numbers, the psychology of the Democratic Party's leadership is operating for Mondale, too, as demonstrated by the practically unanimous public urgings Hart has received to quit fighting and work to unify the party. Mondale has going for him, too, the fact that he won a plurality of the popular vote cast during the primaries with 6,876,729 votes, or 38.7 percent of the total, to Hart's 6,420,995 or 36.1 percent. It's widely felt in the party that Mondale would have scored a majority had Jesse Jackson not run and pulled black votes away. Jackson polled 3,266,413 votes, or 18.4 percent of the total, according to *Congressional Quarterly*'s tally. Not all of these votes would have gone to Mondale, obviously. A large number of blacks might not have voted at all. Still, Hart's ability to attract black votes has been negligible, and exit polling shows that Mondale is well thought of by black voters and he has nearly as many black delegates as Jackson.

Hart's case against Mondale—that he, Hart, is more electable than Mondale—does not seem to hold much water at the moment. The latest Gallup results, published in late May, showed Mondale running behind Ronald Reagan by 9 points, 52 to 43, and Hart trailing by 6 points, 50 to 44. The poll found Hart favored over Mondale by independent voters, 47 to 29 (Mondale led among Democrats, 46 to 33). But when asked which candidate they thought had the better chance of beating Reagan, even independents put Mondale ahead of Hart, 53 to 29. Finally, the poll showed that a Mondale-Hart ticket would lose only narrowly to the Reagan-Bush ticket, 50 to 46.

ACCORDING TO public opinion analyst William Schneider, "Given the choice between a known loser and an unknown loser, Democrats will pick the loser they know. You just can't make the case that Hart is more electable than Mondale. That would only be true if the polls showed Hart beating Reagan and Mondale losing, but they don't." Part of the Hart strategy will be to find such polls—conduct them, probably—and show state by state how a Mondale candidacy would drag Congressional and local candidates down to defeat. Meanwhile, Hart will try to make himself as attractive as possible, showing how he would campaign against Reagan, in hopes that a gradual process of erosion will set in among delegates' already weak enthusiasm for Mondale, and then in their numbers.



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Wisely, from his standpoint, Hart is holding in reserve his divisive challenge to 600 Mondale delegates allegedly "tainted" by having been won through the efforts of delegate committees which accepted PAC contributions. Hart has been publicly downplaying his previous threats to bring such a challenge, in keeping with his sought-after new image of positive thinker and party unifier. Yet in the convention credentials committee, Carol Casey has been working to preserve Hart's right to activate such a challenge to the convention floor. Donilon, Mondale's representative, has been arguing that such a move would violate party rules which require credentials challenges to be posted immediately after the primaries in which an error allegedly occurred. If he decides to push the "taint" issue, Hart presumably would try to put his challenge in such a way that all 600 Mondale delegates would be barred from voting on challenged delegates in any state. This too violates party rules and precedents, but the ultimate authority over the rules is the convention itself. If the delegates decide they don't want Mondale, they will invent the means not to nominate him. Unlike the 1980 convention, delegates this year are not legally bound to vote for any candidate.

Another vehicle could be Jesse Jackson's so-called "democracy" challenge, based on his failure under 1984 party rules to win delegates in proportion to his primary showing. The rules were written—with some of Jackson's key supporters present, though before they knew there would be a Jackson candidacy—precisely to eliminate minority candidates from the race. No one anticipated, however, that the candidate most affected would be a black, and so the party may feel conscience-bound to rectify an unfairness done to Jackson. Strict rectification, however, would add about 285 delegates to Jackson's total. If they came out of Mondale's delegate column, that would cost him the nomination. At the moment there are rumors—but only rumors—of a Hart-Jackson alliance at the convention to stop Mondale.

MONDALE'S CURRENT strategy against Hart seems to be to keep his delegate lead growing, make his nomination seem inevitable, and concentrate on convention-planning and general election tactics as if Hart's candidacy were a bygone problem. Mondale hopes that Hart will get discouraged with his lack of progress and find a face-saving way to effectively quit campaigning while formally staying in the race—possibly according to the model established in 1976 by Representative Morris Udall. Against Jackson, Mondale apparently plans to pick some carefully selected fights on platform issues such as the Middle East and defense budgets in order to establish his independence, yet also reach some compromises with Jackson on other issues such as runoff primaries to ensure Jackson's full support in the fall.

One obvious possibility for preempting a Hart challenge and preparing for the general election would be to give the Colorado Senator the No. 2 spot on the ticket. My guess, though, is that Mondale's choice, if it's his to make, won't be Hart because Hart wouldn't be a supportive, Mondale-like Vice President. I don't think it will be a woman, whose qualifications to be President (rather than Reagan's record) would become the key issue of the campaign. And I don't think it will be Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas, who would help carry his home state, but would be too conventional and conservative a choice. Senator Dale Bumpers of Arkansas or Governor Robert Graham of Florida—both young, attractive southerners—are better bets.

All of this ought to work. Logically and politically, Mondale should be able to hold his delegates and win the nomination. And yet, there remains the slightest chance—10 percent, perhaps—that this latest of Mondale's inevitabilities could dissolve as his other ones have. Beyond logic and politics, something ineffable is missing from Mondale's connection to the Democratic Party. It's partly glandular and partly intellectual. "Passion" is probably the word for it. After all his efforts, and achievements, it would be cruel for the party to deny Mondale the nomination based on its absence, just as it's cruel when one person falls out of love with another. It happens, though, and political conventions occasionally become overtaken by emotion just as individuals do. If it happens this year, the convention might well not even settle on Gary Hart, but look for someone else instead. The chances are that nothing of the kind will happen, but it would help Mondale and the Democratic Party's slim chances against Reagan if Hart would withdraw soon and make Mondale truly inevitable at last.

**MORTON KONDRACKE**

Egypt after controlled elections.

# MUBARAK'S OPENING

*Cairo*

ON THE eve of parliamentary elections in late May, the bearded, octogenarian leader of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikhwan Al-Muslimin*), Sheikh Omar Telmessani, returned to Cairo from a hospital in Switzerland. "My heart, my kidneys, everything is wrong with me," he said with a laugh. Temperate in his public remarks, and evincing a hardheaded empiricism that is rare in this part of the world, Sheikh Telmessani is a reassuring figure for Westerners harboring nightmarish visions of an Egyptian Ayatollah Khomeini: "Differences between Egypt and Israel must be solved through negotiation and not by war or violence, he told me in passable English. Russia is worse than America. Every person who believes in God is nearer to us than those who don't."

But the sheikh is also a wily politician, and in explaining his current alliance with the new *Wafd* Party—which enabled the outlawed Brotherhood to participate in the elec-



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tions—he revealed himself to be a revisionist historian as well. "We never do violent deeds," he said. "My career in life has been based on peace and love."

Not quite. In the late 1940s, the Muslim Brotherhood was responsible for the murders of two Egyptian prime ministers, originally *Wafd*ists; and in 1954 for the attempted assassination of President Gamal Abdel Nasser. The *Ikhwan* was founded in 1929 by Hassan El-Banna, and it wasn't long before it adopted terrorism as a tactic. But in recent years the *Ikhwan* has taken advantage of a gradual liberalization of the Egyptian political process to improve its position by peaceful means, and its image, like that of Telmessani himself, is now a respectable one.

The *Ikhwan* runs reputable clinics and hospitals around the country. *Ikhwan* officials say they see no alternative to President Hosni Mubarak's pro-Western foreign policy. And they favor the adoption of Islamic law for Muslims only. "The Brotherhood in Egypt is more a social than a political organization," said a Western diplomat.

But like the Egyptian landscape—whose pigments are dulled by the dust from the surrounding desert and the mud of the Nile—the *Ikhwan* is concealed in layer upon layer of ambiguity and historical complexity. There are the more extreme fringe groups, like *Takfir Wa Hegira* ("Purging and Spiritual Passage") and *Jihad* ("Holy War"), the latter of which was responsible for the October 1981 assassination of Anwar Sadat. The murder bore striking similarities to the 1949 assassination of Prime Minister Nukrashy Pasha carried out by the *Ikhwan*. Then there is the rank-and-file of the *Ikhwan*. "Telmessani is an effective front man, but what's below him . . . who knows?" said a diplomat in Cairo.

ONE THING, however, is clear: the Brotherhood is a cause with a future. One Egyptian journalist claims that if the May 27 elections had been truly free and the *Ikhwan* had been allowed to run on its own, instead of having to join forces with the *Wafd*, then "70 percent of Egypt would vote *Ikhwan*." Many dispute that claim, but nobody in Egypt denies that traditional religion is undergoing a dramatic revival. The same journalist explained, "We tried the Soviet way, the American way, and the peace-with-Israel way. Nothing changed. All these answers failed. Islam, on the other hand, always has an answer for us."

In other quarters too, strong religious sentiment is apparent. The Coptic churches have never been so crowded. In the alleys of old Cairo, the groans of Coptic hymns—sung in the vernacular of Pharaonic Egypt—rebound off the mudbrick walls. The Copts, who were the world's first converts to Christianity and who trace their lineage back to the Pharoahs, originally fought with the Muslims to repel Byzantine invaders. But ever since the Medieval period, tension and intercommunal violence have often characterized the relationship between Christian and Muslim in Egypt. (The Copts currently account for approximately 20 percent of the population.) In recent months, Copts have been targets of attacks by the *Takfir Wa Hegira* in the Fayyoum region south of Cairo. Coptic Pope Shenouda III remains in desert seclusion, where he was exiled by Sadat in 1981 in a general crackdown on dissidents and extremists. Although Mubarak has allowed the pope to resume his responsibilities, it is believed that the President fears that the patriarch's life would be in danger if he returned to Cairo.

In a city where the population density in the worst quarters is three times greater than in Calcutta, it's not hard to understand why there should be communal tensions, or why a disaffected urban proletariat—as in Iran—should seek religion as a palliative. Notwithstanding President Mubarak's emphasis on domestic development—he likes to cut ribbons at new highway overpasses—infrastructure and services are barely keeping up with a population now numbering 46 million. (Every ten months the population grows by 1 million.) Until now, stability has been purchased by subsidizing the cost of bread, paid in part by the United States. But another line of defense is needed. As President Mubarak told the populace in a televised address on election eve: "Democracy is a shield and a safety valve against internal upheavals."

PRESIDENT MUBARAK, who spent twenty-six years in the air force before becoming Sadat's vice president in 1975, is a cautious man. And the form of democracy he has decided upon—in keeping with a country whose illiteracy rate of 70 percent is still rising—is a measured one. Still, compared to the tyranny of the Nasser years and the charades of the Sadat era, May 27 represented a quantum leap forward in Egypt's internal development. Though five shooting incidents and sporadic rioting marred the polling, Egypt didn't do too badly in comparison with electoral violence in other Third World countries—India, for example. And some of it occurred in rural areas where ideology often gets twisted up in family and personal feuds. Furthermore, although the 72.9 percent of the vote garnered by the ruling National Democratic Party wasn't totally deserved, at least it was an improvement over the 99 percent pluralities of previous Egyptian elections.

Nevertheless, the violence, which claimed two lives and over a dozen wounded, gave an inkling of what could be expected if Egypt's experiment with democracy goes any further.

Since the days of the Old Kingdom over four thousand years ago, any weakening of the central authority in Egypt has always led to the collapse of the state. President Mubarak, who according to insiders is authoritarian by nature, is not about to let that happen. Mubarak hopes to maintain internal stability through his version of democracy, just as Nasser did through the nationalization of the Suez Canal, and Sadat through the political success of the 1973 war. Democracy under Mubarak seems to be an imperfect, Turkish-style variety, with the President and the military controlling all of the security levers; and a Prime Minister and Parliament—composed only of parties sanctioned by the President—taking some of the responsibility, and much of the blame, for problems. One resident



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American commented after the elections, "Now at least Egyptians have a Parliament to blame instead of having to blame the United States."

And with the new *Wafd* claiming 57 seats in the 448-member People's Assembly—nearly twice as many opposition seats as in the last Parliament—Mubarak will have someone to whom he can always point when things go wrong: 73-year-old *Wafd* leader Fuad Serageddin. To borrow an observation from the late President Sadat about the *Wafd*, democracy in Egypt is causing a lot of mummies to wriggle in their tombs.

ENTERING Serageddin's baroque mansion in the Garden City section of Cairo is like stepping back into the decadent era of King Farouk. With much of his wealth expropriated by previous governments, Serageddin—the story goes—lacks the means to keep up his "palace," which with its musty bookshelves and broken skylights has taken on the seedy air of Chatsworth: one could almost imagine Miss Havisham combing the corridors at night. Reclining with a cigar beside a large bust of himself, and surrounded by portraits of former *Wafd* leaders attired in *tarboosh*, "His Excellency"—as he is often called—is a living reminder of why Nasser organized the Free Officers movement in 1952 and threw out the Egyptian aristocracy.

Some say that the *Wafd*'s popularity among the middle class is an "exercise in nostalgia," and that by voting *Wafd*, Egyptians are turning their backs on the 1952 revolution. More likely it's that the Egyptians just want a change, or at least some focal point of effective opposition.

Like Telmessani, Serageddin dismissed the bad blood between the Muslim Brotherhood and the *Wafd* with a wave of the hand. When I brought up the rival militias of the 1940s, his response was: "Where did you read that? It never happened." Yet there is no denying that the *Wafd* and the *Ikhwan* are unlikely partners. As an illegal group, the *Ikhwan* was forbidden to campaign on its own, and the pre-election alliance with Serageddin—which will net the *Ikhwan* several of the *Wafd*'s parliamentary seats—was the next best option. How successful the marriage will be is a good question. More significant, however, is the future of the relationship between the new Parliament as a whole and Mubarak: a relationship which might further complicate the one between Egypt and the United States.

According to one prominent Egyptian writer, who is every inch an insider, Mubarak will now more than ever seek to establish a consensus for the conduct of foreign policy—a consensus that will take opposition views strongly into account. And as anyone here will tell you, the consensus in Egypt is increasingly hostile toward the United States and opposed to a real peace with Israel. (The majority of Egyptians are willing to abide only by the letter, and not by the spirit, of the Camp David accords.) Cairo's foreign policy for months now has borne the markings of electoral politics. Efforts to normalize relations with the Soviet Union were and are to be expected—in April Mubarak expressed a desire to again exchange ambassadors. In contrast, the statements about the United States by top Egyptian officials in the weeks prior to the elections were distinctly hostile. Dr. Osama El Baz, director of President Mubarak's Office for Political Affairs, referring to the abrupt manner of the Marines' withdrawal from Lebanon, said sharply: "You're concerned exclusively with the safety of your own people and the hell with the others."

Moreover, Mubarak's ability to repair the atmosphere of peace seems increasingly doubtful. In April former Israeli foreign minister Abba Eban met with Mubarak in Cairo, but the Egyptian government gave the visit no publicity. A little democracy might be good for Egypt, but what it portends for future relations with Israel and the United States is another matter. As restrictions on the press loosen up, anti-Western attitudes are becoming more pronounced.

The Egyptian military, strengthened by American arms and under the direction of a staunchly pro-American defense minister, Abdel Hali Abu Ghazala, has been less significant in the domestic political equation than some analysts first thought—and hoped. Mubarak may be steering his country toward Turkish-style democracy, but by no means is he a Turkish general: if anything, as a diplomat here noted, Mubarak resembles Eisenhower in the way he has turned his back on his military past. None of the people he is bringing into the N.D.P. to replace former Sadat cronies are from the armed forces. Abu Ghazala is certainly a man to keep an eye on, but as one analyst put it: "Under Nasser, America's relations with Egypt were abnormally bad, under Sadat they were abnormally good, and now under Mubarak they are finally normal."

THERE IS little to indicate that Egypt's relations with Israel or with the United States will get any warmer. Although the United States provides Egypt with $1 billion a year for 66 development projects (the largest nonmilitary aid program in the world), it receives no real political payoff in return. None of the projects are "high profile" in nature, explained Michael P. W. Stone, director of the U.S. Agency for International Development in Egypt. "The Nile is the main artery for everything here, and the Russians built the [Aswan] dam, and I can't think of anything we could do in the same category." In fact, American aid in Egypt may amount to little more than a bribe—to make sure that Mubarak keeps his part of the Camp David bargain.

In his book on Egypt's relationship with the Soviet Union, *The Sphinx and the Commissar*, Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, former editor of the Cairo daily *Al Ahram*, tells how the Russians foresaw that Egypt's financial and military demands could not be countenanced indefinitely. But they were powerless to prevent Sadat's eventual betrayal. Like the Soviet Union, the United States may find that its long-term investment in Egypt is a hollow pyramid.

**ROBERT D. KAPLAN**

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In a nuclear age we need both 'normal' and 'abnormal' politics.

# DETERRENCE AND DEMOCRACY

## BY MICHAEL WALZER

DOES DETERRENCE defend democracy? There are many disturbing questions that need to be asked about the nuclear policies of our government (and about the policies of other governments too), and this one is not, perhaps, the most urgent. It is an important question nevertheless, because democratic politics is one of the values that the strategy of deterrence is meant to defend. The argument is now common on the left that the two stand, in fact, in sharp contradiction—that nuclear deterrence, with its terrifying technologies of instant and hellish destruction, is by nature deeply corrosive to democratic rule. In *Indefensible Weapons*, Richard Falk sums up the argument:

> Being constantly ready to commit the nation (and the planet!) to a devastating war of annihilation in a matter of minutes on the basis of possibly incorrect computer-processed information or pathological traits among leaders creates a variety of structural necessities that contradict the spirit and substance of democratic governance: secrecy, lack of accountability, permanent emergency, concentration of authority, peacetime militarism, extensive apparatus of state intelligence and police.

The "structural necessities" of deterrence militate against public debate and democratic choice, both among the people at large and among their representatives. We live in what might be called a nuclear autocracy. Again, this isn't the worst charge that can be leveled against deterrence. Still, it's worth asking: Is the charge true?

Certainly it wasn't democratic decision-making that brought us to our present state. In none of the democratic nuclear states (nor, obviously, in the nondemocratic ones) did public debate precede the original decision to make nuclear weapons. Not in the United States, where that decision was made under conditions of wartime secrecy; and though the later decision to build a hydrogen bomb was preceded by Congressional hearings, neither the character of that debate nor the public humiliation of Robert Oppenheimer that chilled it are exemplary for democratic politics. Not in Great Britain, where the crucial decision to develop an independent deterrent was made in 1946 by Prime Minister Clement Attlee and five members of his cabinet—"the others," writes Solly Zuckerman, "being kept in the dark." Not in France, where the essential work was underway well before de Gaulle began talking about his *force de frappe*. Not in India, where an underground test was the first announcement of the government's policy. Not in Israel, where some development has obviously been undertaken, though it's not clear whether the country actually has a bomb or not.

In all these cases, of course, the crucial decisions were made by elected leaders; and although elections are not the only constitutional requirement of democratic choice, they are the most basic. Perhaps more worrisome, then, are the lesser decisions that shape the ways in which nuclear weapons are deployed (and hence the ways they might be used) and that are made by men and women who hold no elected office at all. Consider the following example from Lord Zuckerman's *Nuclear Illusion and Reality*:

> . . . long before any decision had been taken by the British Government to replace Polaris with Trident, long before the need for any such decision had been put to the ministers, the men in the British nuclear weapons laboratory had preempted the situation. They had not only started to design a warhead for a MIRVed Trident missile; they had also, with American help, conducted underground tests of their designs.

Theorists of nuclear autocracy are frightened by the prospect—worse, the reality—of an "imperial President" with his finger on the nuclear button. But long before that point is reached, the designers of the weapons will have built their own technological (and therefore strategic, and therefore political) imperatives into the systems themselves. And even the most imperial President is likely to be ignorant of the scientific design of the weapons his button would launch. The tyranny of the weapons lab may well be more dangerous than the imperial Presidency.

If the President is ignorant, so are all, or almost all, the rest of us. The sense of technical incomprehension, which is both widespread and deep, undermines the self-confidence of ordinary citizens and generates a kind of

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apathetic trust in the experts—more apathetic than genuinely trustful. Of course, we don't understand, or most of us don't understand, the economy either. But we experience the effects of different economic policies, and these effects—the rate of inflation, say, or of unemployment—are subject to continuous public measurement. So we feel ourselves competent to judge the managers of the economy, even if we aren't certain what it is that managers of the economy actually do. It's not clear, by contrast, how we are to understand our own experience of the effects of deterrence. The effect we want is the avoidance of war, but the actual effect is this or that degree of risk of war, and there are no continuous or reliable measurements of that. How dangerous is the world we live in? To what extent are those dangers caused, and to what extent controlled, by our nuclear strategies? If ordinary citizens can't hope to give reasonably knowledgeable answers to questions like these, democratic choice is not a plausible option. But we can't, or many of us think that we can't—because of the "structural necessities" of a deterrent posture, secrecy above all, and then because of our inability to understand whatever technical data is made available to us.

SO THE policy of deterrence has been worked out and implemented by small groups of politically powerful or scientifically expert men and women. The most important arguments have been unpublicized; the key decisions have been made in secret or on the basis of information fully available, or fully comprehensible, only to an inner circle of scientists, soldiers, and political leaders. And what is true of past choices about policies must be all the more true of future choices about the execution of policies. If a crisis comes, there won't be time for Congressional hearings, editorials in newspapers and journals of opinion, the organization of parties and movements. Even in the inner circle, disagreements will be brief; and awareness may well come to the rest of us only in a blinding flash.

Non-nuclear total war has built into it a crude but real mechanism of mass consent. Because such wars—World War II is the best example—require nearly universal military conscription and the total mobilization of entire societies and economies, they can be fought only with the passive consent and the active participation of extremely large numbers of people over considerable periods of time. This does not mean that the decision to fight and then to continue such a war is necessarily "democratic," as the example of Nazi Germany is enough to show, but it does give the mass of people a kind of veto power: the war cannot continue if passive consent and active participation become mass disobedience and refusal, as actually occurred on the Russian side in the waning months of World War I. The conduct of modern non-nuclear war (as well as its suffering) is a mass phenomenon. By contrast, the actual conduct of a nuclear war causing deaths in the tens of millions can be accomplished by a couple of hundred politicians and technicians in the space of a few hours. The only role of "the masses" is to die.

The charge seems, then, to be true: "One of the hidden costs of nuclearism," as Falk says, "has been an impairment of the quality of democratic political life." But "impairment" is a relative term, and so we still need to ask how democracies have functioned in the past, in time of peace, with regard to the making of defense policy. We need to think, for example, about the major innovations in weaponry before the atomic bomb—the machine gun, the tank, the submarine, the airplane, poison gas, the blockbuster, the incendiary bomb, napalm. Did any of these come into the arsenal of the modern army as the result of a democratic decision (a public debate, a vote in an assembly)? The answer, of course, is no—and that answer suggests that contemporary nuclear politics is not so much an "impairment" of democracy as it is a sign of continuing inadequacy or failure.

This is not to say that defense policy has never been an issue in democratic politics. Obviously it has been. The size of the navy was hotly debated in the British Parliament in the early twentieth century. Billy Mitchell's campaign in the 1920s for a strong, independent American air force led to prolonged Congressional hearings, a public demonstration of what bombers could do to battleships (covered with great excitement by the press), and finally a spectacular court martial. André Maginot waged a long battle, sometimes within the defense establishment, sometimes in the political arena, for his famous Line—and de Gaulle, later on, waged a similar, though less successful, battle against the spirit of the Line. In the 1930s Winston Churchill staked his political career on a fierce critique of the military weakness of the National Union and Conservative governments. The defense budget is regularly subject to Parliamentary or Congressional scrutiny; its total size, and sometimes also its specific allocations, are questioned and debated. But these sorts of issues have mostly been the concern of the few; the most crucial debates have taken place (as with nuclear weapons and strategies) in committees and behind the scenes. They are rarely brought into the center of a political campaign, not by parties, not by candidates for office. Even a "jingoist" campaign is more likely to focus on attitude and posture than on actual military policy. By and large, there has been little sustained public interest in, and little democratic control over, the selection and deployment of weapons or the choice of strategies. The planning of wars, like the fighting of wars, has never been the focus of democratic attention.

AT LEAST this is true of modern and mass democracy. But perhaps the notion of "impairment" looks further back: the Athenian assembly debated defense budgets and military plans, and though the debates are difficult to reconstruct, they were probably carried on with an intensity and a degree of publicity unknown since. It's not because of nuclear weapons, however, that we don't find ourselves sitting in anything like the Athenian assembly.



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Or perhaps Falk means us to look sideways, as it were, to smaller and more intimate democracies like Israel, where foreign policy is always at the center of a lively political debate. But with regard to the selection and deployment of weapons, there has never been much room for argument in Israel: each successive government has been committed to deploy the most advanced military technology it could develop or procure. And specific strategic decisions, like the decision to build the Bar-Lev fortifications along the Suez Canal, have been debated largely within the defense establishment and have not become (except, perhaps, after the fact) political issues—any more than nuclear policy has become a political issue. In any case, we can't choose smallness and intimacy.

AGAINST THIS background, we might well be tempted to reverse the nuclear autocracy argument. For things do look different in the United States today; and from a democratic point of view they look better. Needless to say, they don't look better in other ways: we might with good reason prefer a nondemocratic nondebate over the deployment of tanks to a very lively debate over the deployment of intercontinental ballistic missiles. Still, there is a lively debate going on right now—a debate that is without precedent in the history of democratic politics.

An incredible number of books on nuclear deterrence and the dangers of nuclear war have been published in the last four or five years, some of them simpleminded and melodramatic, but many of them technically sophisticated, complex, and sober in their arguments. And not only published: these books have been widely reviewed and discussed, reprinted in cheap editions, sold in drug stores and suburban shopping centers. Books about war and weaponry have always been popular, but not books like these, which set out to disturb their readers and which criticize or defend government policies that most citizens, most of the time, prefer to ignore. Soon after Hiroshima, thousands of Americans read John Hersey's *New Yorker* account of the effects of the bomb. In the years since, however, the issue has been repressed; or it has been kept alive only by small groups of citizens and by marginal political movements. Now the debate seems general, participation in it widespread. The flood of books is only one sign of this; I could add descriptions of university courses, magazine articles, television programs, town forums; but the books seem to me most surprising, an undeniable sign of seriousness.

Even more surprising, and more serious, is the recent statement of the Catholic bishops. The Church has been committed for many centuries to the doctrine of the just war, but the application of this doctrine to the planning of wars (and even its application to the conduct of wars) has been left to individual Catholics. Certainly the tradition of Catholic protest has had a "protestant" character—so it looks, at least, to an outsider; it has been a matter of private conscience and not of collective decision. The courageous opposition of the Jesuit priest John C. Ford to terror bombing in World War II (his 1944 article, "The Morality of Obliteration Bombing," is now much quoted) was the opposition of a single person. The same can be said of the Oxford University philosopher Elizabeth Anscombe's opposition to "Mr. Truman's Degree" in 1957, and also to the arguments against nuclear deterrence worked out by the English Catholic Walter Stein and his associates in 1961. But now the American bishops have spoken with a single voice and with the moral authority of their office, and their statement has been widely publicized and debated. Theirs is a new presence in American political life (it is interesting that no one responding to it has raised the old specter of Romanism): it suggests a shift in the internal character, and also an enlargment of the scope, of democratic argument.

And many citizens have done what the bishops have done: joined together, taken a stand. There have been movements in the past against a war in progress—among the British at the time of the Boer War, for example, or in this country during the long years of Vietnam. There have even been movements against a war in prospect—the campaign of isolationists and America Firsters against American involvement in World War II. But campaigns like those of today's German Social Democrats and Greens or the British C.N.D. or the American nuclear freeze movement, aimed at the deployment or development of particular sets of weapons, seem without precedent. Was there ever a political movement, involving large numbers of citizens, against the battleship or the submarine or the bomber?

THE SAME shift has occurred at the level of electoral politics. Candidates for President of the United States today declare themselves for or against the nuclear freeze. They debate the merits of the B-1 bomber and the MX missile. In the past, candidates discussed the size of the naval budget or the need for military preparedness, but not the costs and benefits of particular weapons. During the 1930s the British and American defense establishments made important (and different) decisions about the kinds of airplanes they would build—decisions that helped determine the kind of war they fought in the 1940s. But these decisions never became political issues. Yet the equivalent decisions today are very big issues indeed. Why?

The difference is that the risks involved in nuclear deterrence are very great, and that those risks are widely known. In the 1930s the risks of aerial bombardment were understood only in an abstract and impersonal way. People talked about them and wrote about them, sometimes in graphic terms; but the message did not sink in—perhaps because there had been no demonstration at the end of World War I comparable to Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II. A general opposition to war, a dislike of conscription, a reluctance to pay for military preparedness, an uneasiness with patriotic speeches: all these were present in the



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1930s, but not a close attention to weapons and strategies. Similarly, the ban-the-bomb movement of the late 1950s and early 1960s was marked by a generalized and not a specific opposition to nuclear weapons. Today both sorts of opposition are commonly expressed: advocates of disarmament have learned a great deal about first- and second-strike capacities, delivery systems, throw-weights, and so on. If there is still a certain strident simplemindedness in the public debate (on both sides), there is also by now considerable sophistication and, given the technical difficulties, a surprising number of knowledgeable participants.

The firebombing of cities was never debated because it was never vividly imagined: it was not a popular nightmare. But a nuclear holocaust is vivid and frightening for millions of people. And democratic politics is responsive to the popular sense of vulnerability and danger, whenever that sense is sufficiently concrete. The sense of nuclear danger doesn't work all that differently from the sense of economic danger, though concreteness is harder to come by. We know people who have been hurt by unemployment or inflation, not by atomic bombs. And concreteness is important, as the agitation for a test ban in the late 1950s suggests. What fueled popular concern was in part the danger of war, but more importantly the more immediate and comprehensible danger of contamination by fallout—strontium 90 in the kids' milk. But today the danger of war, even without the experience, seems to have taken on a similar immediacy. The current debate, the bishops' statement, the movement for a nuclear freeze, the rush of candidates to take positions—all this is the democratic response.

The test of a democracy is not that the right side wins the political battle but that there is a political battle—and not just a random encounter or an intermittent campaign but a sustained and serious engagement of forces, with a well-informed public mobilized through an array of committed parties and movements. So we are beginning, though only just beginning, to meet the democratic test. In this case, however, more than in any other, we may well be less interested in democracy than we are in rationality. We want, we desperately need, the right side to win. A democratic decision to destroy the world would not be a satisfactory outcome; nor would a democratic decision that permits the world to be destroyed. Democracies respond to danger, but they don't always respond in time or in the best possible way. Given the awesome choices that we face, do we really want a democratic response? How should the present debate be conducted? How should decisions be made?

NORMAL DEMOCRATIC politics seems somehow inadequate, designed to cope with different issues, different kinds of danger. Interest group organizations, temporary and unstable coalitions, bargaining in the corridors, short-term compromise: this sort of thing, normally so useful, seems incongruent with the risks involved and with the seriousness of the decisions required. Imagine one Congressman saying to another (what any number of Congressmen could easily say): "I'll vote to build the MX missile if you vote to ban the import of specialized steels. . . ." The pairing is inappropriate, the negotiation darkly comic. Perhaps this kind of politics is inappropriate to foreign policy generally: the point is often made, and even ordinary politicians are aware of its force. Different mechanisms come into play, sometimes, when foreign policy is being debated. But if we think about the character of senatorial decision-making during, say, the debate over the Panama Canal treaty, the difference doesn't seem all that great. Presidential pressure, with its usual threats and promises, and the nervous sounding-out of campaign contributors back home, seem to have played too large a role; the merits of the treaty, too small a role. In the arguments over SALT II, perhaps, Senators drew more deeply on their own understanding and deepest convictions; even so, they were hardly unaware of more immediate political considerations. How can such considerations be avoided, when the men and women who vote yes or no are short-term officeholders who must themselves seek reelection?

BUT IF normal politics is problematic, abnormal politics seems hardly less so. The excitement of mass movements that suddenly appear and as suddenly disappear; the mobilization of fear; marches, demonstrations, civil and uncivil disobedience: all this fits our sense of danger, but it is in its own way incongruent with serious decision-making, with the complexity of the issues and the need for "cool" appraisal and study. Decisions about deterrence policy can't be made in the streets. Nor, if they were, would the decisions be democratic, for the number of people in the streets, even when it looks very large (the streets are very narrow), is always a minority of the citizenry. The banners carried and the slogans chanted by the marchers don't make, aren't intended to make, coherent arguments. They make simple and striking assertions. Perhaps the leaders of the march have simple views; perhaps they have views they are concealing from their followers. In any case, we need to consider their views in some other forum—and that brings us back to the committee rooms and corridors of normal politics.

It may be the case, however, that politics itself is a mistake—whether it takes the form of a deal or a demonstration, whether it brings interests or passions into play. Maybe we should leave nuclear decision-making to an elite of experts, to scientists and strategists. That is more or less what we have done until now. I suppose political leaders in fact do something more than ratify decisions made elsewhere; sometimes they negotiate or arbitrate the decisions; and commonly they front for their less visible colleagues, taking responsibility even when they aren't in fact responsible. And the decision whether actually to use the weapons remains their own, just as it was Truman's in 1945; that has not changed. But development and deployment have pretty much slipped out of their hands. Technical competence dominates po-



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litical authority, though it does so with the consent of the authorities; only recently has that dominance been called into question.

So it is the elite of experts, not democratic politics, that has brought us to our present state. That speaks well for the experts, it might be said; deterrence as they designed it has "worked," for we have avoided the catastrophe of nuclear war. On the other hand, the risks of catastrophe have probably increased over the years along with the increase in the number and destructiveness of the weapons. Deterrence has not been a steady state but a race, and every forward movement in the race, so we are told, jeopardizes the balance upon which our safety depends. More accurately, our forward movement jeopardizes the safety of our adversaries, and theirs jeopardizes ours; and we are both driven to keep moving forward. Perhaps, then, the experts have not done well, or not well enough: we need to call their competence into question.

FIRST OF ALL, the experts disagree among themselves. In the current public debate, all sides have their resident experts. But the disagreements obviously precede the public debate; they have surfaced briefly in the past, as in the Oppenheimer-Teller controversy over whether to build the H-bomb or during the negotiation of the test ban treaty. Nor are the disagreements only technical in character—of the sort that might plausibly be settled within the community of technically knowledgeable people. Decisions about deterrence raise moral and political issues, and scientists and strategists have moral and political commitments, even when they conceal these commitments and speak only the language of their trades. Shop talk is sometimes a necessity, sometimes an obsession; but it is also, sometimes, a way of concealing from laymen the ordinary character of disagreements in the shop. Some years ago, I had occasion to study the debate among British scientists over strategic bombing policy in the early 1940s. The most striking feature of the debate is that it was carried on entirely in technical terms. And yet a glance into the future suggested strongly that the real disagreement was political: the same men were to line up on the same "sides" again and again—though the technical issues were entirely different each time. In the event, Churchill made the crucial decision, and that was probably proper (though I think he made the wrong decision). A political choice was what was required then, and that most often is what is required now.

But political choice requires in turn what might best be called common sense, and of common sense the experts are often entirely bereft. Hence the second point: it is useful to have scientists and strategists who are narrow and deep, immersed in their data, committed to the beauty of their speculations, ready to follow the logic of their arguments and to accept the risks of absurdity (or what looks to the rest of us like absurdity). Not all scientists are like that, but it is good to have some who are. We need to hear what they have to say; we don't need to follow their advice. McGeorge Bundy made this point very nicely in an article in *Foreign Affairs* in 1969:

> There is an enormous gulf between what political leaders really think about nuclear weapons and what is assumed in complex calculations of relative "advantage" in simulated strategic warfare. Think-tank analysts can set levels of "acceptable" damage well up in the tens of millions of lives. They can assume that the loss of dozens of great cities is somehow a real choice for sane men. They are in an unreal world. In the real world of real political leaders—whether here or in the Soviet Union—a decision that would bring even one hydrogen bomb on one city of one's own country would be recognized in advance as a catastrophic blunder . . .

And yet, Bundy goes on, the spell of expertise is such that "the internal politics of the arms race has remained the prisoner of its technology"—and hence, of its technologists. The unreal world is important to science because it is a world where the imagination is free. But politics is the art of negotiating constraints, and a free imagination is not always what one wants in a political leader.

My third point stands in partial contradiction to the second. If some scientists and strategists live in imaginary worlds, others are all too committed to this world—that is, to their own research, their labs, their work groups, and so on. They have particular interests, just like all the rest of us. The adoption of this strategy or that weapons system enfranchises a particular group of strategists and scientists and disenfranchises another; large-scale disarmament would be a general disenfranchisement. This is undoubtedly one reason for the appeal of what is called worst-case analysis: it serves as an effective bar even to limited disarmament. "The worst cases that have bureaucratic power," as Hal Feiveson argued recently in *Dissent*, "appear to be those that can be ameliorated only by new and expanded weapons systems. . . ." Which systems are better is always a hard question, but the crucial point here is that when they try to answer this question, the experts are by no means detached and impartial. They constitute a highly politicized elite. Given the "structural necessities" of nuclear deterrence, theirs is often the scientific equivalent of court politics—all whispering and intrigue. True science, by contrast, is democratic, a world of colleagues who talk out loud about what they are doing. The experts talk only to people with the same security clearance as their own. They produce, writes Feiveson,

> . . . technical reports that often are not read at all, in which the authors remain anonymous, and where there is, in striking contrast to serious scientific work, little survival value in being right, little stigma in being wrong. There is often no effective peer review in the bowels of the great technical bureaucracies. . .

THE EXPERTS would do better if their private politics was relocated, if it found its place within a genuinely democratic debate. That requires some reappraisal of the



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"structural necessities" of deterrence, but those necessities don't in fact extend very far back from the positioning and programming of the actual weapons; they don't extend to the choice of weapons or of strategic plans. These choices don't have to be secret; they are not made under emergency conditions; and they don't require, except when they come to be implemented, a concentration of political authority. No one has argued that the current, relatively open, debate about weapons and strategies undermines the effectiveness of our nuclear deterrent. This or that outcome might do so, but not the debate itself. It is a good thing, then, that all sides have their experts, so that what the experts say is subject to peer review—and so that the peer reviews are subject in turn to lay review.

WE ARE BACK, then, to democratic decision-making. The Russians and the Chinese may have no alternative to court politics, but we do. Is our alternative better?

The choice I have already canvassed between normal and abnormal politics doesn't exhaust the possibilities of democracy, for the combination of the two produces something different from either one alone. The practical opposite of nuclear autocracy is not interest group bargaining; nor is it a "green" revolution. Here an analogy may be helpful even though it is by no means exact. The practical opposite of capitalist oligarchy in the democratic societies of Western Europe and North America was neither "bourgeois parliamentarism" nor revolutionary radicalism. It involved important features of both. The combination is not well understood or even widely studied, because its concrete forms—the labor movement and social democracy—are disdained among intellectuals on the left and right alike. Nor did the labor movement or the social democratic parties ever achieve a decisive success. The inequalities they meant to abolish are still with us, though they are far less disastrous than they once were for everyday social life. A similar politics aimed at ridding the world of nuclear weapons is similarly unlikely to achieve a decisive success. But it may well reduce the prospect of disaster.

No other kind of success is at all probable. There isn't going to be a revolutionary replacement of the present nuclear regimes: the streets will not take over the corridors. And there is no reason to expect the men and women who inhabit the corridors to transcend their normal politics and negotiate a nuclear breakthrough. SALT II + *n* won't be the final and definitive treaty. Indeed, there won't be a SALT II, let alone a succession of SALTs, unless the hand of the corridor people is pushed by the passions of the street people. At the same time, marchers and demonstrators can't by themselves produce a treaty; their demands must be mediated through a political and then through a negotiating process. The political process is necessary so that the treaty meets the needs of, and actually reassures, ordinary citizens, who may or may not be marching. The negotiating process is necessary so that the treaty constrains our adversaries, in whose countries no one is marching. Abnormal politics without mediation would be very dangerous, for it isn't isomorphic across the lines of the cold war. This is an important point, commonly stressed by opponents of contemporary peace movements. But normal politics without popular mobilization and the drama of the movements is also very dangerous, for it poses no serious obstacle to the forward pressure of the arms race.

The combination of normal and abnormal politics isn't easy. The two are often sharply opposed, and it is only from some distance that one can endorse both. In practice, up close, one can't endorse both, or one can do so only serially, not simultaneously. Sometimes it is necessary to march, sometimes to campaign and vote, sometimes to lobby, sometimes to stay home and write articles. Because the nuclear danger requires us to be anxious and impatient, and because democratic politics requires a canny and persistent patience, we will often disagree about where and how to focus our energies. I can see no way to avoid such disagreements, or to resolve them; we will often divide our labors. Perhaps it is worth recommending mutual tolerance among the advocates of normal and abnormal politics, but the recommendation is probably a waste of time—a certain intolerance is one of the things that keeps us all going. Still, there is a significant sense in which both sides are right, for it is only in combination that we can find the appropriate political method of bringing common sense to bear on nuclear policy. Though neither set of political strategists is likely to state it clearly, the goal is simply this: to achieve a minimal and so a relatively decent deterrent policy and a controlled and limited nuclear regime.

I MUST confess at the end of this essay to a faith in common sense—a democratic extension, I suppose, of McGeorge Bundy's faith in the wisdom of "real political leaders." Men and women with common sense won't fight nuclear wars. I mean *our* common sense, a twentieth-century artifact, trained by catastrophe. It requires an esoteric strategic doctrine or one or another kind of religious or political fanaticism to contemplate using the weapons we now possess. But common sense still leaves a lot of room for argument. So it is important that the arguments be carried on in the open and that ordinary citizens listen and join in. None of us, however, can listen all the time; the issues are too hard and too painful. That's why the intermittent but passionate outbursts of abnormal politics are both unavoidable and necessary. The day-to-day drift is always toward specialized, secret, technically complex, and esoteric doctrine. But real political leaders, *if they hear the clamor of their constituents*, can stop the drift. Nuclear deterrence will defend democracy only if it is democratically constrained. The last few years give us some reason to hope that the risks of deterrence will eventually generate a democratic politics capable of limiting those risks. But the most difficult work remains to be done. □



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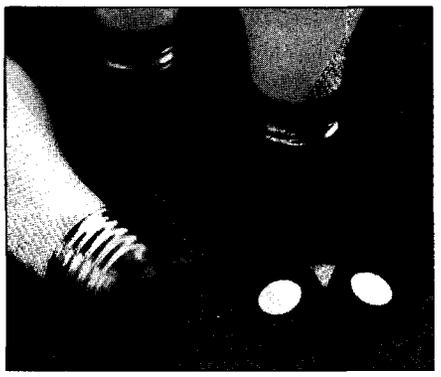
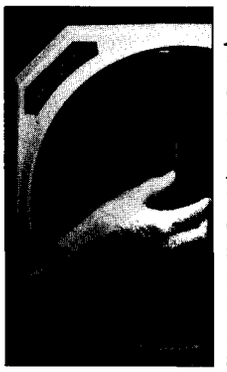
They are familiar household conveniences now, the little half-wave rectifier buttons that attach to the bottom of light bulbs and extend their life up to 90 times, sparing you the trouble of bulb changing for years at a stretch while you save a bundle in bulb replacement costs. But the patented Screwge Bulb Saver is one of the first to be UL-listed, meaning it has survived nearly

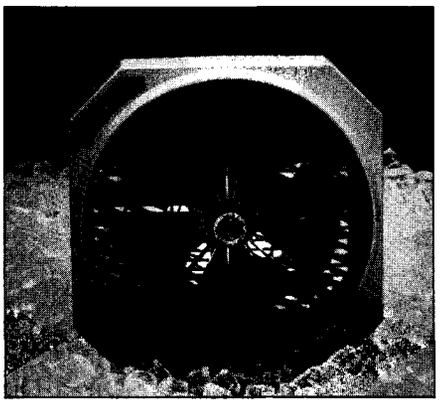


two years of strenuous independent laboratory testing and been certified safe for home and commercial use. It provides security along with savings, safe enough even for high-temperature recessed fixtures. You'll notice that Screwge Bulb Savers reduce light output so you may want to increase bulb wattage. We are offering 6 for **$13.00** ($1.95) #A1052, 12 for **$21.00** ($2.95) #A1053 and 24 for **$39.00** ($3.95) #A1054. The manufacturer provides a 5-year warranty.

### FAN-TASTIC

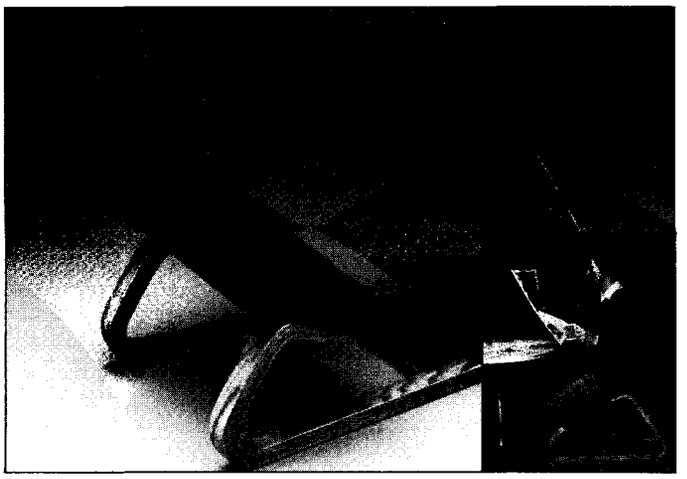


All fans claim to circulate the air, but this is the only one that circulates air in all directions at once, wall to wall, floor to ceiling. As the fan operates, a unique rotating louver on the face directs the air flow through a 360° sweep so it is not blasting out in a single current. Louver rotation speed can be adjusted or the louver locked in position to give the directional air flow of a conventional fan. The 3-speed Circulaire fan is quiet, lightweight (under 9 lbs.), fully portable and energy-efficient. This is truly a year-round fan, creating a cooling breeze in the summertime, circulating air in every direction in winter so that heat does not gather at the ceiling. Made in Providence, R.I., it measures 16⅝″ x 9⅛″ x 17½″, carries a 1-year warranty, and costs **$42.00** ($5.95) #A1060.



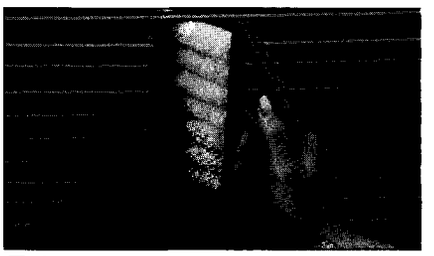
### REINVENTING THE CHAIR

Conventional seating positions the body so the angle between torso and legs is 90° or less. This posture tilts the spine forward, puts pressure on the lower back, and cramps breathing and circulation. The Cloud Chair represents an entirely new concept of seating developed in cooperation with doctors and physical therapists. It redistributes body weight using the knees and lower legs so the back and upper body automatically straighten and find a relaxed position of perfect balance. The chair frame is oak laminate shaped by a "bentwood" process. The seat and knee rest are padded and upholstered in a neutral brown color. The chair positions you at the exact same height



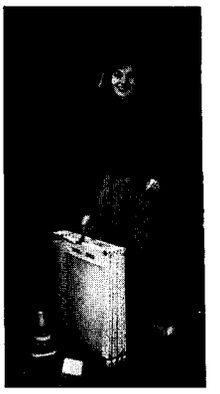
as a regular office or table chair and has been used successfully in homes and offices by people 4'6″ to 6'9″. It will improve your comfort, posture and the back strain associated with long periods of sitting in conventional chairs. **$90.00** ($9.95) #A925.

### 7-FINGERED BLIND CLEANER

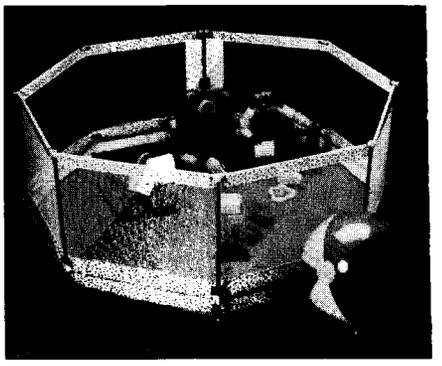


It has taken a long time figuring out how t clean venetian blinds efficiently. Early inve tions simply spread the dirt around instead picking it up. Later ones worked better bu most cleaned only one slat at a time. Now California designer has finally solved the prol lem convincingly. It has 7 roller fingers, 4″ lon and covered with a synthetic lambswool tha picks up and holds dust and dirt. Pull the trigge and the fingers spread enough to slip over th blind slats (6 mini-blind slats or 3 conventiona 2″ slats). Release the trigger and the slats ar held firmly between the cleaning rollers. The move the cleaner back and forth along the blinc release and grip the next set of slats. Whe soiled, the cleaning rollers can be removed an washed. These revolutionary blind cleaning tool cost **$9.00** ($1.95) #A787. Two for **$17.00** ($1.95 #A7872.

### PORTABLE PLAYSPACE



The Crawl-Space puts the typical playpen to shame. It provides nearly twice the play area at half the weight with a fraction of the moving hassle. The jointed eight-panel design allows a multitude of configurations so it fits anywhere in the house even around corners, enclosing a 16 sq. ft. protected play area. In seconds it folds up into a neat secure 24″ x 24″ x 4½″ package tha carries (or tucks away) as handily as a shoppin bag. The Crawl-Space is made of chrome plate steel tubing with vinyl skirting, polyester netting and ratchet hinges that protect against a chil changing the configuration once it has been se up. **$49.00** ($6.95) #A962.



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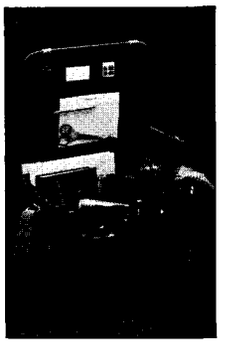

This oversize bag is an overwhelming success with photographers, artists, students, musicians, dancers, opera singers, nuns, poets, duck hunters, cyclists, plumbers, teachers, reporters and travelers...because it's a veritable labyrinth of roomy pockets. Its real name is the Danish Bookbag. It's been called the best device for carrying things ever invented. Made of waterproof canvas that wears like iron, the bookbag has an unusual zipper design that enables the bag to expand to double its normal width — to a full 8 inches — so there's always a place to stuff one more thing. It also has two outer pockets in front and a large back pocket. An adjustable 2" wide strap makes the burden easier. Choose grey #A483, brown #A484, blue #A569, black #A564 or red #A568. **$59.00** ($3.95).

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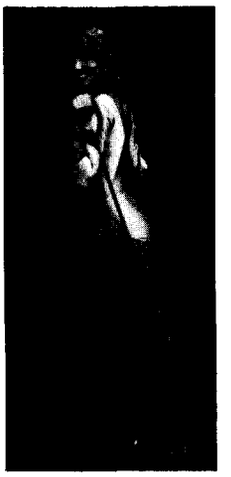
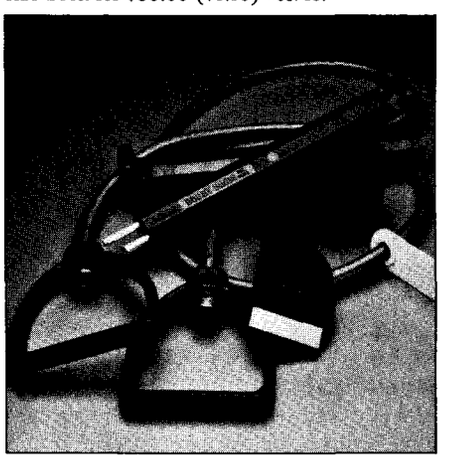
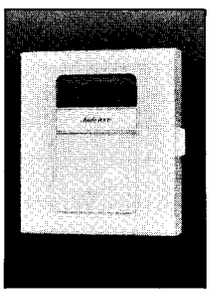


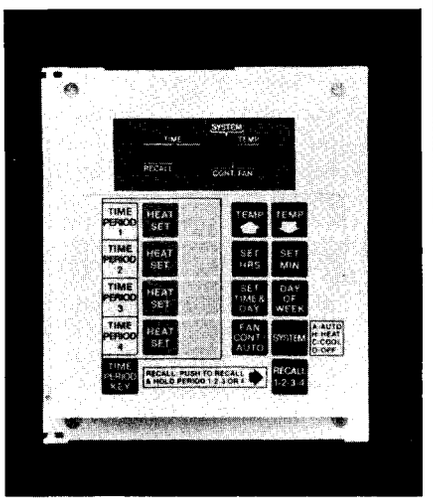
The Lifeline Gym may well revolutionize the exercise business. It allows you to simulate just about any of the exercises done on the expensive machines found in health spas and gymnasiums. The reason is rubber — a stretchable rubber cable of the type used to stop planes landing on aircraft carriers. With this rubber cable, resistance increases with movement. This compensates for normal inertia and leverage gains, so your muscles are challenged through their full range of movement. But the rubber is more effective yet. Because you have to resist its tendency to snap back on the return move, you gain a double benefit from your effort. You overcome positive *and* negative resistance in the course of each exercise. The Lifeline Gym is adjustable for individual strength levels and for different body-shaping intentions. It comes with its own carrying case and illustrated instruction/exercise book for **$36.00** ($3.95) #A748.



## THERMOSTAT THAT THINKS YEAR-ROUND



The average homeowner can save up to 25% a year on home cooling costs, 30% a year on heating costs. What it requires is coordinating cooling and heating with actual patterns of use, so you are not paying to cool or heat unoccupied space. The best expert helper you can find for this temperature-management task is the computerized Jade Thermostat Control. A built-in microprocessor lets you program up to four different temperature settings a day with different schedules for weekdays and weekends. Changeover between heating and cooling modes is automatic. Combined heat/cool setting range extends from 35° to 98°. Easy manual override if your normal schedule is interrupted. Continuous time and temperature display. Battery backup holds program 2 weeks should power fail. Homeowner installation takes approximately ½ hour (manufacturer offers toll-free advice if needed). Works with heat only and heat/cool systems, qualifies for Federal and State Energy Tax Credits, and costs **$99.00** ($4.95) #A1090. A companion model for two-stage heat pump installations costs **$159.00** ($5.95) #A1091.

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# STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

## From South Africa and Elsewhere

Athol Fugard is an actor. That is made powerfully clear in two South African films just given their American premières at the Film Forum in New York. Fugard, now an internationally recognized dramatist, wrote both of these films. One of them has other rewards as well, but both of them confirm Fugard's force as an actor. He has been seen in

*The Guest*
(RM Productions)

*Marigolds in August*
(RM Productions)

*Once Upon a Time in America*
(Warner Bros.)

Brook's *Meetings With Remarkable Men*, Attenborough's *Gandhi* (as Smuts), and in the film of his best play so far, *Boesman and Lena*, directed by Ross Devenish. The last was a mistake—Fugard brown-skinned as Boesman; but these two new films, both also directed by Devenish, make clear that Fugard is not just a writer who acts a bit—he is a strong, individual artist of acting. (Not irrelevantly, he is also an experienced theater director.)

He needs all the power he can summon in the first of these films, made in 1977. *The Guest* is a biographical piece about Eugene Marais, the South African naturalist and poet (1871-1936) who led a lonely, stubbornly independent life, tormented by drug addiction. Fugard's script deals with an episode of nine months in 1926 when an understanding doctor stows Marais on an isolated Boer farm, there to undergo withdrawal from morphine under the care of the farmer and his family. The farmer is given strict orders by the doctor about the number of pills to dole out to his guest, and no matter how fiercely Marais pleads or storms, the farmer sticks to his orders. Eventually Marais pulls through this crisis, though he is not cured.

The contrast in the episode is pat: the Godfearing, hardworking, simple farm family, striving to observe canons of hospitality with this trying man; the haunted, aloof, gifted guest, often brutally rude because of his physical anguish. And the dramatic progress of the piece is slight: the characters meet, collide for some months, then Marais recovers sufficiently to make amends for his previous behavior and go. (Ten years later he committed suicide during a withdrawal crisis.) Apparently Fugard was drawn to this material because of the abutment of two kinds of virtue: the farmers' dedication to Christian act and Marais's dedication to science and art that, for reasons not explored, entailed drug horror. But once that abutment is shown, the film merely goes on until it's over—one more account of withdrawal anguish.

In the supporting cast, the doctor, Marius Weyers, and the farmer, Gordon Vorster, both huge men, are especially taking. Still, so far as the film maintains interest, it's through Fugard's performance of Marais. In his recently published *Notebooks*, Fugard wrote (September 1976):

> Home after seven weeks in Pretoria and completion of the principal filming of *The Guest*. An important experience and possibly the most demanding and challenging role I have ever attempted.

The challenge is met. Clean-shaven, with a face that suggests the late photographs of Antonin Artaud, small, lean, burning-eyed, Fugard creates a man whose being seems to consist only of a nervous system minimally cloaked with skin, vibrating as every moment of consciousness strikes him like a blow.

*Marigolds in August*, made two years later, is at least equally compassionate but more affectingly so, because it's better dramatized, less clinical. The film has a principal cast of three, Fugard the least of them. The two larger roles are played by Winston Ntshona and John Kani, the black South Africans familiar to theatergoers from their work with Fugard in his plays *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* and *The Island*. In fact, these plays are, in some measure, collaborations of the three men (TNR, December 21, 1974).

The film is a parable, as its title foretells: marigolds are out of season in the South African August. Ntshona is a poor man who has to walk miles to his one-day-a-week job as gardener in a white suburb of Port Elizabeth. Kani is even more wretched: he has no job, and he has a family. (We first see him and his wife at the burial of their smallest child.) When Kani comes to the suburb job hunting, Ntshona jealously guards his turf. Tensions grow between the two miserable men over the scrap of employment, and they are reconciled by a colored (a person of mixed blood). This man, played by Fugard, lives in the bush and makes a few dollars by catching poisonous snakes, which he handles comfily—another bit of symbolism. Fugard, close to the blacks, casual and free in his life, makes them wonder. "You could be a white man," says one of the black men almost jealously. Fugard replies that he tried it and didn't like it. (According to the *Notebooks*, Fu-

### FILMS WORTH SEEING

*After the Rehearsal*. Ingmar Bergman's seventy-two-minute meditation on theater life, done with only three actors. Less a drama than a dream. Unique and absorbing. (Reviewed 6/25/84)

*The Natural*. Robert Redford has altered Bernard Malamud's baseball novel to his own ends, but some pleasures result. (6/11/84)

*This Is Spinal Tap*. If Monty Python were American, they might have made this pseudo documentary about a British rock group's U.S. tour. Subtly scathing. (5/14/84)

*Under the Volcano*. Virtually devoid of Malcolm Lowry's texture, but Albert Finney and Jacqueline Bisset are splendid as the sodden British consul in a Mexican town and the wife who helps to cause his decline and tries to halt it. (6/18/84)

**SK**



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gard's character is drawn from life.)

Ntshona and Kani are, as always, irresistible. They never play for sympathy: they play two men who are sympathetic. Fugard, bearded again, is squirrelly, dry, patient, humorous, in a role that could have been a sagacious nuisance. Again, as in *The Guest*, he plays a man who fascinates him, and he has the talent to evoke the same fascination in us.

Devenish, a South African white to whom Fugard is apparently devoted, shows no increase in skill over the film of *Boesman and Lena*. The color and editing reflect a tight budget. The second film is much better than the first, but both of them certify that, among Fugard's extraordinary talents, acting must be included. It is part of the commitment of a committed man.

What (I almost said "on the other hand") is Robert De Niro up to? This excellent actor is said to be choosy about the scripts he accepts, yet here he is in the leading role of a monstrosity called *Once Upon a Time in America*, intended to be an epic of Jewish gangsters in America, a koshered counterpart to *The Godfather*. In itself that's not a bad idea, but this script is so ludicrously written, so adventitiously characterized, so madly constructed that I could scarcely believe that De Niro was really present. I had the feeling throughout that this was one of those trick films where, by double exposures and matte shots, they include figures who were somewhere else at the time; and that's how they got De Niro in frame. When this picture was shown at Cannes this year, it reportedly ran over three hours and forty minutes; now it's a mere morsel of 135 minutes, but condensation is a poor excuse for this hodgepodge.

The director, Sergio Leone, is one of six scriptwriters. Perhaps they all worked serially without showing one another what they had done. Leone, said to be chief instigator of the "spaghetti Western," is not stupid, just adolescent. He makes the movies that he was seeing inside his head when he was watching American films as an Italian teenager. Visually his style is Early Jukebox. He engaged lush designers and a cinematographer who can handle lush design, Tonino Delli Colli; and for the score he got his own pocket Puccini, Ennio Morricone, to ladle out some good gooey stuff. It's all a marinara dream on a billion-dollar budget.

About the story let's say only that it starts in a fabricated New York in 1921, with streets and rooms on the lower East Side about the size of the Grand Canyon, and waddles on through some thirty-six years, while warped boys grow up to be successful hoods, good girls go straight and bad girls go jolly, a Jimmy Hoffa type ambles through, and the survivors of the original gang achieve the dignity and respect that gray-haired killers always achieve in films.

One other point: De Niro's character is named Noodles. So inevitably there comes a point when someone has to say solemnly, "I love you, Noodles."

A few moments remind us of the De Niro of *The Last Tycoon* and *Raging Bull* and *The Godfather Part II*. Too few. Why is De Niro noodling?

The Franz Liszt of Las Vegas.

# LIBERACE, THE KING OF KITSCH

## BY EDWARD ROTHSTEIN

WHEN FRANZ LISZT finished his triumphal concert tour of Berlin in 1842, he left the city in a carriage drawn by six white horses. Thirty carriages followed, along with several hundred private coaches and escorts of fifty-one horsemen in multicolored regalia. Prince Felix von Lichnowsky rode at Liszt's side; the University of Berlin suspended classes. The Prussian King himself, Frederick William IV, waved from the palace windows.

When Liberace began his triumphal concert appearances at Radio City Music Hall during April—having sold out the 6,000 seat auditorium for two weeks—he was driven onto the stage in a custom silver Rolls Royce with left-hand drive covered with a mosaic of mirrors. He wore a $300,000 Norwegian blueshadow fox cape with a sixteen-foot train, made of 300 skins banded with jeweled Italian silk brocade, weighing 175 pounds. He called this Radio City engagement "the culmination of forty years in show business"—"the most elaborate show of my career." His wardrobe for the two-and-a-half hour show cost over a million dollars; he had at least three different Rolls on hand for carrying him on and off stage in style. And if Liszt's concert pianos were decorated with elaborate filigree, Liberace was not to be outdone: his Baldwins sported clear glass tops, mirrors, glitter and gold—hardly indicating the troubled financial condition of the piano firm itself.

*"Le concert, c'est moi!"* Liszt proclaimed, explaining that he was "affecting the Louis XIV style." Liberace's ambitions were equally regal and grandiose, but more in the style of a Las Vegas hotel: all plush velvet and rococo extravagance. His concert even opened with an announcer proclaiming in the darkness, "Ladies and Gentlemen, Welcome to the Las Vegas home of Liberace."

A screen lowered; before Liberace was even seen in the flesh, a movie began introducing us to a day in the life of the pianist in Las Vegas. He rises in his vaulted-ceilinged master bedroom, stretching drowsily as his manservant gives him his monogrammed silk robe accompanied by the sound track of a soupy version of Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto. The newly awakened

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virtuoso is alert enough to hear the music's cues; he makes his way to an ornate piano just in time for the solo piano entrance. He later does the same in his bath tub, soap bubbles jumping wildly in the air; his bathmat has a keyboard woven into it, even his pool is painted with keyboards—all awaiting his solo riffs.

The bedroom ceiling is painted with images from the Sistine Chapel; his bathroom ceiling presents the mischievous face of Liberace himself surrounded by clouds and blue skies, conducting cherubs dancing on piano keys. And through it all, leading us on this cinematic tour, the pianist winks and laughs as the music plays. Then, the cadence approaching, he enters a sleek Rolls Royce, presumably heading off to New York where we await his appearance. It is the mythic prelude for a modern showman, who like his nineteenth-century predecessors, makes a display of his self, if not his soul. "Well, look me over!" Liberace flirtatiously proclaims, in the flesh, a bit of sparkle in his pompadoured hair, stepping out of the Rolls after the movie screen is raised, white fox furs trailing behind him like a wedding gown. "I didn't dress like this to go unnoticed!" And with ebullient charm, he introduces his "chauffeur and friend" Terry, who appears regularly throughout the evening, bearing on his arms the regal, mighty, weighty capes of the maestro—scarlet, black, ivory, silver—before the piano playing begins.

Let there be no mistake: Liberace is a pianist, despite the clothes and the cars. He proves it by rarely dropping a note, whether during "Chopsticks," "Chariots of Fire," or phrases from Liszt's First Piano Concerto. He is 64 years old, and perhaps, if it hadn't been for the Depression, Wladziu Valentino Liberace, once a child prodigy, might have been wearing simple black suits in Carnegie Hall, punching out his octaves and his runs, flawlessly making his way through Liszt's Transcendental Études.

But instead Wladziu formed a five-piece band and toured his native Milwaukee to make money, recognizing even then that the heart of musical finance and acclaim in the modern age was less in the staid world of high art or "serious" virtuosity than in its pop variations. He played in night clubs with a radio dance band and called himself "Walter Busterkeys." Then came club dates, the Persian Room at New York's Plaza Hotel, the consecration of Wladziu's last name (did Liszt need a first?), television shows, three movies (including a role as a casket salesman), three books (including one of favorite recipes), concerts in Carnegie Hall and Madison Square Garden, three Royal performances in England, and a reputed $3 million yearly contract with the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas—a town which now also hosts both the Liberace Museum and the Tivoli Gardens, Liberace's restaurant.

HIS SUCCESS at least matches that of the great European virtuosos of the previous century. But there are differences in this peculiarly modern reincarnation. Liszt, for example, was a lean, spiritual figure; Charles Hallé said he was "all sunshine and dazzling splendor, subjugating his hearers with a power none could withstand." Liberace, though, is slightly plump in face, cherubic, sexually ambiguous; if his eyes flash, it is from reflections off his clothing. His is a material version of dazzling splendor, found in minks and jewels and capes and glitter. While Liszt wore his many medals during a concert, to click amiably during the pianistic acrobatics, Liberace's rhinestoned outfits get more attention than the music itself. There is a purple coronation robe (after


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—*Kirkus Reviews*

WEAKNESS AND DECEIT
U.S. POLICY AND EL SALVADOR
By RAYMOND BONNER
Correspondent for *The New York Times*
Published by Times BOOKS




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King George V), using $260,000 worth of chinchilla, a $150,000 black diamond mink, lined with 40,000 2.5-carat Austrian rhinestones, and a suit of black velvet tails with diamond buttons that spell out "Liberace." Before every medley of classical, pop, or nostalgia favorites, there is another cape to be borne off by Terry. "Why don't I slip out and get into something more extravagant?" Liberace teases, before coming back for more applause.

The opening music of the concert is, however, soberly intended—a tribute to the serious pianistic heritage out of which Liberace grew. But it is an image of the "classics" refracted through rhinestones and diamonds—puffs of smoke rising from the floor, Liberace at the glass-topped mirrored Baldwin, accompanied by an orchestra, with an urban skyline suggested against the back of the Radio City stage. There is Liszt and Chopin, Rachmaninoff and Beethoven—a medley with slightly saccharine orchestral commentary and simplified piano parts. It is mostly snippets of the concerto repertoire from the nineteenth-century, music of soloistic heroism, celebrations of the self. A candelabra—with electric bulbs—glitters on the piano.

LIBERACE BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

"I love to play that kind of music," Liberace says afterwards into his wireless microphone, beaming with enthusiasm. And it was played with pleasure, even in these banal arrangements. Liberace explains that the medley was a tribute to his one time idol, Paderewski—the great virtuoso pianist who was Liberace's patron when he was 7 years old, who was himself not above simplifying a few passages, whose mane of hair may have inspired Liberace's pompadour, and who later in life became Prime Minister of Poland.

His other idol, Liberace continues, was Eddie Duchin, and an element of Duchin's pianism seeped into this classical medley, as if it were accompaniment to social conversation and dance, spiced with just a hint of nostalgia. Liberace even plays, in tribute to Duchin, Chopin's second Nocturne, affected and mannered; the point is not the music, he seems to say with each drawn out rhythm and filigreed ornament, but the atmosphere.

Nostalgia is an important part of this re-creation and all of Liberace's act. The era of virtuosity is gone, the era of Chopin is gone, the era of Duchin is gone; the past is increasingly stylized—we are left with Liberace's version of Duchin's version of Chopin. Even the candelabra is not just an image, but an image of an image; Liberace explains to everybody that he got the idea from watching Paul Muni play Chopin in the film *A Song to Remember*.

The audience is also a refracted image of the mixture of nineteenth-century royalty and bourgeoisie that came to hear Liszt. Traveling in from the suburbs and from New Jersey, paying $20 and $25 a seat, this is a night out for the twentieth-century bourgeoisie, here to be entertained. And if the virtuoso always managed to tap the dreams and desires of his audiences, Liberace does no less: "Wasn't it wonderful to watch people dance in those days?" Liberace asks nostalgically of Duchin's era (not Chopin's), and there is enthusiastic applause.

In illustration, Liberace himself begins to dance in front of the piano, with the percussion creating mock tap sounds. Then he plucks a woman out of the audience. "It's a shame to dance alone!" That night, his partner, excited and eager, was Mary Jane from Fort Lee, New Jersey.

Mary Jane, blushing, her blue and white dress swaying, walks with the pianist onto the stage, where they dance together, she swooning, hugging, as the orchestra plays. Then Liberace coyly, like a television game show host, offers Mary Jane gifts for coming to dance with him. They walk arm in arm to the glass-lidded piano, and Liberace reaches in. Out of that magical instrument—whose powers were once sufficent to dominate the musical life of an entire era—Liberace pulls his gifts: a scarf, with Liberace's signature. He shows her how to wear it. Then, teasingly, he wonders if there is anything else to be found in the piano. And he pulls out a recording made with the London Philharmonic, autographed by Liberace in gold. Pause. And more: a scented silk rose, "to remember me by." Pause. And a gift certificate to eat at Liberace's Las Vegas restaurant ("1775 East Tropicana Avenue," he winks at the audience). Pause. And a pass to see the Liberace Museum in Las Vegas.

Mary Jane, it turns out, has already been to the museum, which contains Liberace's collection of cars, furs, and pianos, including a red, white, and blue Rolls used in a Bicentennial Salute, a



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Czar Nicholas Royal Uniform with 22-karat gold braiding, a life-size oil painting of Liberace and a large portrait of his late mother, Frances. Mary Jane has even used the museum for a tax deductible donation to benefit the Liberace Foundation for the Performing and Creative Arts—a foundation, which, apart from its scholarships for music students, may serve the same function for Liberace. Whether by accident or design, Liberace had found the right dancing partner.

THE OBJECTS handed to Mary Jane out of the glittering piano possess a sort of aura, like the fetishistic collections of the museum itself. Liszt's lady admirers kept cuttings of his hair, dregs from his tea, silk handkerchiefs; one even picked up his cigar butt from the street and put it in her bosom. Liberace, aside from loading Mary Jane down with signatured goodies, tosses a handkerchief into the audience after wiping the sweat from his brow, and allows listeners to touch his cape. In the lobby, for those less fortunate, a music box piano graced with Liberace's signature sells for $20; a box of Liberace scented piano soap can be bought for $12. There are Liberace key chains, handkerchiefs, and souvenir jewelry in the shape of candelabra—each offering a share in what Mary Jane is getting firsthand.

Later, in fact, Liberace offers the audience another sort of contact: he would like everybody to see his magnificent rings, which protrude on his piano-playing fingers. But he obviously can't pass them around. So he has made a film. ("I'm glad you want to see them; because, let's face it, you bought them.") The hall darkens, the screen lowers and Liberace narrates the tour of his own rings, the screen illuminated with his hands. The rings embody Liberace's entire act, giving the fingers magical pedigree. One by one they are described, including a candelabra ring with platinum candlesticks and diamond flames; a piano ring with 260 diamonds and keys of white ivory and black jade. There is also a piano watch with sapphires, rubies, diamonds, and emeralds; and a diamond bracelet, a gift from his mother. "I always keep a couple of empty fingers," Liberace jests, "just in case."

And invoking, unawares, all the other imagery of the classic virtuoso, Liberace does not omit sexual overtones. Liszt after all, eloped with another man's wife; the tales of his illegitimate offspring were legion. Liberace has a homosexual aura. Mary Jane's husband raises his hands in protest when he too is asked to dance. "Well, some other time perhaps," Liberace tells the husband. "But I got her all ready for you." The sexual banter continues, all through the show, mixing a bit of bad taste with a hint of self-mockery. After colored fountains sprinkling in rhythm accompany a medley of Johann Strauss waltzes, Liberace notes the possible effect the sounds of running water can have on listeners and thanks the audience for "holding it in." "Let's hear it for Terry," he asks, as a 136-pound black diamond mink cape is borne off. "The last fellow who did his job got a hernia." One of the last fellows also filed a "palimony" suit against Liberace.

And the allusions to Liberace's wealth are also everywhere, including jokes—for example, Liberace's struggle to have his clothes used as tax deductions ("I went into the I.R.S. wearing this cape and said, tell me, could this REALLY be worn socially?"). He mocks his own ostentation here, reassuring the audience that despite those minks and fox furs, rhinestones and jade, he really is one of them, an ordinary mortal who pays taxes and who shops at Safeway and K-Mart, both jestingly mentioned in his act.

BUT THIS ordinary soul, of course, is also always extraordinary. The act, the banter, the sexual and monetary grandiosity, the nostalgia—all really is a frame for the pianism. A Chopin medley is all scented handkerchiefs and precious pauses, sentimentally dedicated to Liberace's late mother ("She is up there in the best seat in the house; listening to it"). There is a medley of Gershwin favorites, Strauss waltzes, and then the climax: Liberace comes onstage and asks the audience what he should play. The requests are shouted out from the 6,000 seats. "New York, New York," "Let Me Call You Sweetheart," "Chopsticks"—and Liberace agrees to improvise a medley on these audience favorites. And what happens is a shock, a surprise that again echoes images of virtuosos past.

For the playing is so genuinely sweet, so sensitively lyrical, that it becomes *moving*. And in the midst of one of the songs, the audience, as if on cue, begins to sing along, pianissimo, starting as a hum, then building: "Let me call you sweetheart, I'm in love with you. . . . "

"You make me feel so good!" Liberace calls out in return to his 6000 fans. And he has won them all, displaying his pianistic gifts in the theme song from "Chariots of Fire," that left even a hard-nosed critic admiring. "I'm having so much fun, I'm almost ashamed to take money for this!" Liberace says later. "But I will!" And the ovation begins.

IT IS an ovation that resonates, after this most peculiar of concerts. Both then and now, in both Liszt and Liberace, the jangling medals or luxurious furs, the scandalous affairs or the palimony suit, the insistence upon regal mythic powers in the midst of ordinariness—all this is not extraneous to the figure of the virtuoso, but part of his substance, the signs to an audience of the meanings in this nineteenth-century music or its contemporary pop-musical descendants. It is not only pure sound that is at work, but an entire world of associations; what is dreamed of in the music is made real on the stage; what is heard is also seen.

The virtuoso was a mythic figure, but one who could also speak directly to the bourgeoisie, sharing the same origins, capturing in the substance of his music, the listeners' dreams and desires. Wladziu Liberace reminds the audience of his own similar origins, while exaggerating in his appearance the wealth and carefree exuberance of their dreams. He is the apotheosis of Las Vegas.

Liberace, though, is an image of an image of the older virtuoso, taking his manners not even from the original models, but from popular images of those models, like Paul Muni's movie role of Chopin. Liberace's is a popular stylization of virtuosity—itself already a popular nineteenth-century phenomenon. Nineteenth-century musical life is the source of the images that are invoked and distended, made both more shallow and more expansive.

Even the piano, which during the nineteenth century was the instrument of the bourgeoisie and the source of power for the virtuoso, has been turned by Liberace into ornament, its power found not in its music-making innards but in its surface decoration. In the nineteenth century, the showmanship



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of the virtuoso could be found in the substance of the music, in the demonic flash and power of the playing. Here it is found in material splendor and banter. The music itself is cherubic rather than demonic, and projected sentimentally through a scrim of pop manners. The sentiment is not wrestled from the music, neither by the performer nor by the audience; it is presented in advance, ready for consumption, with a show of open arms.

THE MUSIC, too, is just an image: no "real" Beethoven or Liszt or Chopin is played. What is heard instead is a stylized reference to this music. What is important is Liberace's playing of this music, not its dramatic conflicts, its statements about the individual in bourgeois society, or its dreams of something more than the merely material universe. What is important is its recognizability. Liberace's "Moonlight Sonata" is meant to invoke the great and distant Beethoven, but in a way that defers to the sentimental meanings that have accumulated around classical music for the popular listener.

Of course, even nineteenth-century virtuosity was concerned with image and display. In the nineteenth century, however, many virtuosos were also composers. And in Liszt's best compositions technical difficulties are made so extravagant, and are so fluently overcome, that they become marvels, suitable accompaniments to Liszt's oneiric lyricism; the result—as Liszt must have known in naming his famous piano études—really is "transcendental." And the figure of the virtuoso bore that same transcendental relation to his audience. He came from its ranks and reproduced its worldly struggles, pointing to a higher realm, in which the mundane is transformed into the spiritual. Liszt even became devout later in life.

Liberace's version of transcendence, though, can be seen in the Sistine Chapel paintings on the ceiling of his grand bedroom in Las Vegas, and in his invocation of his dead mother, looking on, "from the best seat in the house." Both art and religion are distilled and packaged, edges smoothed over, rough surfaces polished. The desire for transcendence here becomes nostalgia, as frequently happens when Romanticism begins to decay. The result is kitsch, warm and beloved.

But despite the commercial plugs, the overeager boyish glee, there is in the midst of this glitter still some sincerity, some good faith. Even kitsch has the power to move and to stir; indeed that is almost its entire purpose, to touch directly, to reassure, to awaken sentiment. Liberace courts the audience. Look at me, he calls, touch my cape, my rings; laugh at me if you like (but not too loud, I'm very close to you); listen to this sweet song; let me call you sweetheart; wasn't that just wonderful? I *love* that kind of music.

It would be a mistake to mock this seduction while proudly breathing more rarified air. Not even Horowitz, for example, who in his prime was a direct descendant of the virtuoso tradition, could have sold out Radio City for two weeks. In a way, Liberace is more representative of our time. He is simply an exaggeration of the character of our musical life, which itself is a distorted, peculiar transformation of nineteenth-century musical culture, thriving on invoked images, ritualistic signs, and commercial energies.

Those signs and images still have power. At the end of the concert, the reverent audience rushes forward in gratitude as the maestro bends down to shake hands; a frail elderly woman dressed in black even runs down the aisle, desperate to touch his flesh. Holding the wireless microphone Liberace looks up at the rest of the audience, still standing in ovation, and purrs with glee, "Oh, I feel like the Pope." Terry drives a convertible Rolls on stage to pick him up, and Liberace stands in the back seat looking out at the cheering audience, smiling broadly, eyes twinkling, as the Rolls moves offstage. His jewelled cape glittering on his shoulders, the pianist raises and lowers the microphone again and again with an outstretched arm, pointing it at the applauding listeners as if spreading incense in ecclesiastical blessing. Liszt was returning to Las Vegas.

# CITY LIGHTS

## Cities and the Wealth of Nations: Principles of Economic Life by Jane Jacobs

(Random House, 257 pp., $17.95)

In *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, published just over two decades ago, Jane Jacobs took on Robert Moses, Le Corbusier, and much of the urban planning profession. Her latest book, *Cities and the Wealth of Nations*, has an even more impressive set of targets—virtually all the economists, from Adam Smith to Marx to Keynes to their modern successors.

Clearly her move from Greenwich Village to Toronto has not made her timid. Unfortunately fearlessness is one of the few common characteristics of these two books. *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, while occasionally quirky and given to overgeneralization, was a powerful and persuasive challenge to planning orthodoxy. Its impact has been lasting and beneficial, helping to make concepts like neighborhood preservation, scale, street life, and mixed-use districts part of public consciousness as well as of contemporary planning practice.

*Cities and the Wealth of Nations*, however, is quite a different matter. Its presentation is murky, its use of evidence far from rigorous, its argument sometimes confused and all too often confusing, and its claims pretentious. For the most part its recommendations, both those stated and those implied, do not strike me as beneficial; I hope they will not be quite as lasting.

Jacobs's new book begins with a concern common to a number of recent books on national and world affairs, though admittedly she states the problem more sharply than most. The present state of the economy, she argues, promises "profound economic decline." "The reality of stagflation," she writes, "has done nothing less than



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make nonsense of some two centuries and more of elaborate theoretical thought." But even though her language may be sharper and her vision more apocalyptic, the issue she raises is still a familiar one. Her response, however, is not.

She believes that economists from Adam Smith onward have made a fundamental error, that they are all guilty of a kind of economic original sin. She labels their mistake the "mercantilist tautology"—"the idea that national economies are useful and salient entities for understanding how economic life works and what it may be. . . ." Not surprisingly she has an alternative to offer, and not surprisingly that alternative is the economy of cities. "Cities," she writes, "are unique in their abilities to shape and reshape the economies of other settlements, including those far removed from them geographically." "Cities," according to her, "are the specific economic units that can replace imports with their own production, and the specific units that cast up streams of new kinds of exports." The key to past development and future growth lies not just with cities as a whole, moreover, but rather with those cities which are "import replacing" and "export generating." Modern day examples of this special kind of city include Hong Kong, Singapore, Taipei, and Seoul. In Jacobs's view, most Western cities, except for Boston, have lost the capacity to perform these two roles successfully.

TO JUSTIFY her position she presents an eclectic collection of anecdotes, historical observations, case studies, economic analyses, and personal observations. Her references cover a remarkable span of time and space, ranging from descriptions of Ethiopia before the rise of Rome, to the sad plight of twentieth-century Montevideo, the checkered history of the tiny French city of Bardou, and the significance of the movie *Bread and Chocolate*. These are among the best parts of the book, especially her descriptions of how the T.V.A. went from success to failure, of the Shah's futile efforts to import progress to Iran, and the economic transformation of Shinohata in Japan. Again her conclusion from all these wildly diverse times and places is that only regions with successful "import replacing" and "export generating" cities create growth. The rest fall into a variety of categories ("Supply Regions," "Transplant Regions," "Bypassed Places") marked by failed hopes and ultimate decline.

For Jacobs, government has very little to do with the creation of successful city regions. At one point she says, "Development is a do-it-yourself; for any economy it is either do it yourself or don't develop." At another point she observes, "City regions are the outcomes of many different corrections triggered by many different inputs of feedback information. To be sure, the corrections are not wholly automatic, but then, neither is our breathing."

IN FACT, she offers only two directly stated recommendations for the future—one major, one minor. Her major proposal calls for the creation of the modern equivalent of city-states, what she calls "the expedient multiplication of sovereignties (not semi-sovereignties or provinces)." The minor one is the use of local tariffs to correct against unhelpful changes in the value of currencies. In fairness, she does not rule out other possibilities, but on this point she is deliberately vague:

> . . . germane correction depends on fostering creativity in whatever forms it happens to appear in a given city at a given moment in time. It is impossible to know in advance what may turn up except that—especially if it is to prove important—it is apt to be unexpected.

While government's capacity to foster positive city development is limited, its potential to do damage is almost limitless, indeed almost inevitable, according to *Cities and the Wealth of Nations*. National governments undermine cities in three distinct ways: through their control of currency and trade; through "prolonged and unremitting military production"; and through "prolonged and unremitting subsidies to poor regions." The first works against the natural ebb and flow of urban economic life; the latter two help produce a "transaction of decline" by "milking" cities of their capital. As Jacobs sees it, there is an almost inherent conflict between the needs of a growing nation and its prospering cities. She writes,

> . . . to hold themselves together as systems, nations must drain their cities in favor of transactions of decline and must undercut volatile intercity trade in favor of supplying settlements that can't replace exports. In response, city economies stagnate. Stagnating, they undermine the wealth, well-being and capacity to devel-



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> op further. . . . In the end, both cities and the nation itself come to ruin.

Hence, her recommendation for the "expedient multiplication of sovereignties."

IN MANY WAYS I am troubled that I am troubled by this book. I have admired Jane Jacobs's past work, even her somewhat controversial *Economy of Cities*. I am a city person by birth, by choice, and for the past ten years by profession. I should be delighted with an argument that stresses the importance of cities, something which is all too infrequent these days. But the more time I have thought about its thesis, its presentation, and its conclusions, the more uncomfortable I am with *Cities and the Wealth of Nations*, the less persuaded I am by it, the more dangerous I consider its recommendations, at least for urban America.

Even the book's opening has something unsettling, almost silly, about it. To be sure, economics has proved less of a science than many had hoped in the 1960s. But to see its central weakness as the failure to conceive of cities as the central force for growth seems at best a tremendous oversimplification. In fact, it is quite hard to know how to respond to such a generalization. Very possibly the role of cities has been underestimated. Certainly the world has become more urban, and therefore growth or decline is likely to take place in an urban setting. But my own sense is that cities are on the receiving end almost as much as on the passing end of economic change. This was the case with the Industrial Revolution; today it is the case with the rise of service industries and the decline of manufacturing.

Then there is the issue of Jacobs's method of analysis. The categories she creates to distinguish among cities and regions are often interesting and suggestive. But they are rarely rigorously defined. What precisely is it that distinguishes an "import replacing, export generating" city from a city in decline? In her last chapter, for example, she cites Boston as a model of the former and New York of the latter. But what exactly does this mean? In 1982 New York had a significantly higher per capita income and a lower percentage of residents living below the poverty line than Boston. In the last five years Boston gained just over 154,000 jobs, New York City just over 212,000 jobs. Over the last decade, Boston lost a greater percentage of its population than New York did. These statistics hardly square with Jacobs's categorization.

The somewhat mushy quality of her analytic method becomes additionally troublesome when combined with the way she presents her evidence. Skipping from century to century, from continent to continent, can be fun. It also can be disconcerting, and it is hardly what is needed to refute Adam Smith, Keynes, and Marx, or any one of them for that matter.

More troubling still are the implications of Jacobs's conclusions for public policy. Already *Cities and the Wealth of Nations* has been hailed by critics who I am sure consider themselves both progressive and pro-city. But the basic answers Jacobs has for stagflation and urban development are profoundly conservative. She is strongly opposed to planning. She is, albeit reluctantly, opposed to welfare payments. She is against government intervention. She sums up her view of planning in the following way:

> "Industrial strategies" to meet "targets" using "resolute purpose," "long-range planning" and "determined will" express a military way of thinking. Behind that thinking lies a conscious or unconscious assumption that economic life can be conquered, mobilized, bullied, as indeed it can be when it is directed toward warfare, but not when it directs itself to development and expansion.

Anyone familiar with the history of Master Plans, not to mention the examples cited in this book, would have to acknowledge the serious limitations of planning. But when approached flexibly and with some modesty, long-range planning can and does work, even in the area of economic development, even in promoting the sort of diversity Jacobs advocated in *Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Indeed the success of Japan's economy, which repeatedly receives high praise from Jacobs, has a good deal to do with Japan's strong emphasis on economic planning.

To her credit she is rather disturbed about her own views on welfare, but she is nonetheless emphatic:

> Welfare programs . . . and grants and subsidies to bring standards of living and services in poor regions into line with those of prospering city regions unfortunately also work out as transactions of decline. . . . If they are at all generous, then if anything they are even more voracious feeders on cities than military programs.

This is a very silly statement for a num-


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ber of reasons. But just to give one: cities, even prospering cities, tend to have a disproportionate number of poor residents. Cities, therefore, gain more than they lose from transfer payments.

Not only is Jacobs against government intervention, but also, as I noted earlier, she would go one step further by favoring the creation of new city-states. As a former city official I have to admit there were times when this idea seemed appealing. The truth is, however, that almost nothing could be worse for cities themselves, at least American cities. Contrary to what Jacobs implies, cities are not financially independent entities being milked by the national government. American cities are dependent cities—dependent on other levels of government for their operations. On average, for cities with populations of 250,000 or more, 40 percent of the budget comes from other levels of government. If anything, there should be greater national intervention, not less.

In many ways it is appropriate that the title of this book incorporates the title of Adam Smith's great classic. For in her own way Jacobs is also a believer in the "invisible hand." In her vision, cities, freed from national interference, planning, and welfare programs, would prosper. Adam Smith's "invisible hand" did not work the past; there is even less reason to believe that Jane Jacobs's would work in the future.

**ROBERT F. WAGNER JR.**

Robert F. Wagner Jr., former deputy mayor for policy of New York City, is a fellow of the Institute of Politics at Harvard University.

# BORE VIDAL

## Lincoln: A Novel by Gore Vidal

(Random House, 658 pp., $19.95)

> Lincoln, Lincoln, burning on
> In the nation's pantheon—
> A mystery of like degree:
> Did he who made Myra make thee?

Gore Vidal compels respect both for his output and his virtuosity, particularly for the latter. To compare his last book *Duluth* with *Lincoln* is a startling experience, even though his earlier work has prepared us for such shocks. *Duluth* was a puckish and willful attack on the business of characterization in conventional novels. Their car lofting itself in a snow drift, two women perish but are transmuted almost at once into characters in other and parallel fictions, one becoming a Marchioness in a Regency romance written by yet another of the chimera of *Duluth*, the other appearing in the soap opera *Duluth* and communicating via the screen with inhabitants of the geographic city. Yet even geography is mocked—the city is not the *Duluth* we know. It has snow, yes, but palm trees and barrios as well, and the abiding enigma of a spaceship which changes its location whenever the captain of police moves the marker pin representing it on the wall map at police headquarters.

*Lincoln*, by contrast, sets great store on exact and careful characterization. As Vidal intended it to be, the work is literal, solid, and reverent. It is somber, for its subject is somber. Like Vidal himself, observers at the time saw Lincoln's obsession with funny stories as a homely screen behind which the sphinx sheltered his true face from the savageries of the time, savageries which were strangely organic to him and which grew as it were from his person. But the assiduity of *Lincoln* has a stodginess to it as well, as if the awesome subject has defeated all whimsy. Again, if *Burr* and *1876* had not prepared the reader, it would be hard to associate this novel with the dancing boy of American letters.

There are three general species of historical novel. One is the bodice-ripper of the mass paperback market. The second is of the kind that provides genuine historical instruction rendered more piquant and given reality through the lives of specific people of the period. The limitation of this group is that the writer can do no more, in fact sometimes does less, for the subject matter than does a good historian or biographer; readers have reacted to this fact by buying popular history and biography and ignoring even the best of historical fiction. The third and best species of historical novel is that which, though set in the past and amply vivifying it, is also a model of the present. It is not particular and peculiar. It is universal and, however well researched, timeless. *Vivat* Thornton Wilder!

Vidal's *Lincoln* nearly scrapes into this high category, but that is due to Lincoln himself rather than to Vidal. For Lincoln is still here, behind the right shoulder of every modern President, because Lincoln made the modern Union. As John Hay, Lincoln's secretary, says in the novel's last pages, "He not only put the Union back together again, but he made an entirely new country, and all of it in his own image." The novel's last sentence expresses Hay's conviction that Lincoln went so far as to will his own murder, to atone for "the great and terrible thing he had done by giving so bloody and absolute a rebirth to his nation." Though for reasons of this rebirth Lincoln is a modern and perduring President, *Lincoln: A Novel* is a strangely dated piece of work lacking in the fancy, idiosyncracy, and flashes of lightning for which we depend on fiction writers, not least on Gore Vidal.

The publishers quote the Lincoln scholar, David Donald, as saying, "It is remarkable how much good history Mr. Vidal has been able to work into his novel. Again and again I have gone to my books to check details that I did not remember and nearly always I find that he is quite correct." It is true that this exactitude is maintained for over six hundred pages and for that reason deserves praise. Vidal has failed, however, to filter historic events through the peculiar sieve of a literary imagination. There is a sense of inhibition in the novel, as if Vidal has chosen his particular way of telling the tale because his reverence for Lincoln has forced it on him. Since *Lincoln* never takes flight and offers no more enlightenment than a good practical biography, the reader wonders what its reason for existence is.



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Throughout the novel, then, distance is maintained. We are told, as a biographer would tell us, that there are madness and rancid dreams in Lincoln as well as a great grandeur of will; thus all the elements suitable to literary complexity are there. But we experience these no more intensely than we would in a history. The impact of the casualty figures from Shiloh, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, and from the brutal campaign leading to the capture of Richmond are described rather than demonstrated. "On July 2nd, Lee tried to break the Union left; and was repulsed. The President was more and more on edge."

We experience in the same way, that is from outside, Lincoln's assassination, the last instants of his consciousness. The novel does add some credible bursts of dialogue, a fictional low life for the pharmacy clerk, David Herold, who would be hanged for his part in the assassination, an occasional brief appearance by characters from *Burr* and *1876*, and a small rearrangement of the movements of some of the major figures. "At the time of Kate Chase's Boxing Day reception," writes Vidal in his afterword, "McClellan had been sick in bed for almost a week; but I needed him at the Chases'. I have not done this sort of thing often."

Though these are minor devices, though Vidal's *Lincoln* is examined only by his external features and through the reactions of his secretaries and cabinet and old friends, though the novel has the texture of statuary rather than of living flesh, *Lincoln* nonetheless provides—within its self-imposed limits—a fascinating and accessible picture of strange and ambiguous Abe.

NO PRESIDENT ever came to Washington less auspiciously than Lincoln, for he was inheriting both a White House and a Union in ruins. All the ironies and contradictions of the times and of Lincoln's nature are well exploited by Vidal. Plagued by the threat of the secession of Maryland and Virginia, Lincoln arrives in the pestilential city in disguise and flanked by bodyguards. He has been elected as an honest westerner of simple origins, but even that is a pose, or what is called now image making. "I am sure he split a rail or two in his youth," remarks Elihu Washbourne, "The *honest* part is true of course. But all the rest was just to get out the vote at home." Abe's bumpkin front is enough, however, to fool William H. Seward, Secretary of State, into the strangely Britannic illusion that he can be "premier to Lincoln's powerless monarch." Considering himself the mystical husband of an inviolable Union, on his inauguration day Lincoln finds himself President of a "mere rump of the disunited states." Inside his tall hat, as Salmon P. Chase notices, he carried an elaborate file of letters and documents, yet he is acute enough to be the first U.S. President to have his inauguration speech printed up in quantity so that the press will not garble it.

He will go to war for the Constitution yet suspend habeas corpus and right of assembly to save Maryland from secession. He does not believe in Seward's Episcopalian God, yet he believes absolutely in that blood-red destiny which will give his life its extraordinarily tragic shape. Though a former railroad engineer waging a modern and technological war, his parables are all of boggy country roads and wagons, of farmers and hogs. He grinds down the wayward sisters of the Confederacy but cannot manage his squat, spendthrift wife. He uses the drawn slaughter of Antietam as a platform from which to liberate the Confederacy's slaves, yet he does not consider the United States a potential home for the black man. "Why would any coloured man want to live in this country, where there is so much hatred of him?" Lincoln asks in support of the Congressional plan to relocate the slaves in Central America. "There are passions too deep for even a millennium to efface."

The major figures of Lincoln's story are dealt with in the spirit of the work—exactly and competently and yet a little woodenly. George B. McClellan is so Napoleonic, so full of a dangerous military hubris, that he keeps Lincoln waiting downstairs for an interview. Ulysses S. Grant, who bloodily wears down the Confederacy, passes up the chance to be lionized at the theater with Lincoln and heads home to Illinois to visit his children. William H. Seward is brought only slowly to an awareness that Abe is no hick; he achieves an intimacy symbolized by a simultaneous attempt on his life by the same claque who assassinated Lincoln. Salmon P. Chase, a collector of holographs of the great, sees himself as the next President, and in the meantime is a brilliant Treasurer—the inventor of the green-


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back—though his domestic economy is always under seige. When he marries off his dazzling daughter, Kate, to rich Governor Sprague of Rhode Island, he believes he has secured himself for life, but Sprague's tradings with the Confederacy bring his Presidential ambitions to grief. Edwin M. Stanton is a crusty, brave, asthmatic, and skeptical Secretary of War. Yet somehow the blood that Vidal puts in the veins of all these men flows sluggishly.

One of the most annoying things about reviewers is their capacity to ignore the book which *has* been written and to propose and praise the hypothetical book they would have preferred the author to produce. Yet it does seem that throughout this novel-biography, Vidal has avoided the chance to make a true novel, to let the core of dreams and passions, childhood wounds, adult phobias, burdens and exaltations inform the outer surfaces of events, and so achieve a Lincoln more pungent and memorable, more mysterious yet resolved, more ultimately informative, than any mere annalist could manage.

**THOMAS KENEALLY**

Thomas Keneally is the author of *Schindler's List* (Penguin), among other books.

# YOUNG MBAS IN LOVE

## Powerplay: What Really Happened at Bendix by Mary Cunningham

(Linden Press/Simon and Schuster, 286 pp., $16.95)

## Three Plus One Equals Billions by Allan Sloan

(Carroll & Graf, 270 pp., $8.95 paper)

O.K., maybe she didn't sleep her way to the top. Given that Mary Cunningham has just committed to print a 286-page autobiography with the singular purpose of establishing her virtue, I'm certainly willing to concede the point. Let's not mention, for the moment, the incidents that got those awful rumors started: the conspicuous hand-holding with the boss at the Republican convention and at the U.S. Tennis Open four years ago; the not-so-subtle insinuations to her colleagues about how close she was to the boss; the daily rides to and from work with the boss; the fact that when the boss left his wife, he moved into an apartment directly across the hall from her place. After all, Mary Cunningham never gets around to mentioning any of those teensy-weensy little things in her book. What Mary Cunningham wants you to know—Lord, how she wants you to know it—is that she never, ever even kissed William Agee, the former head of the Bendix Corporation, until long after the rumors of their alleged affair forced her to leave the company she loved. She may have fallen from grace, but never from the state of grace. According to her, the problems resulted from her own naïvete ("It never occurred to me that [people] might see me playing tennis with Agee and get the wrong idea"), and from that all-purpose villain, the press, eager to label her "a slut on page one." Well, sure. Why not?

Still, Mary Cunningham's story transcends—if that's the right word—the genre of the badly written, self-serving autobiography on at least three levels. First, Cunningham proves that she can get down there in the slime with the best of them. She claims to be well-versed in the teachings of Catholicism, but she apparently skipped over the part about turning the other cheek. To all the people she believes slandered her during her brief stint at Bendix—and she almost never offers proof beyond her own imaginings—she tosses up slanders in return. She is petty, catty, cruel—all adjectives she uses to describe just about everyone mentioned in her book. No one is spared, not arch-enemies like Michael Blumenthal, who ran Bendix before joining the Carter Administration, not bit players like Agee's first wife ("It's not that I want you back," Cunningham quotes Mrs. Agee as telling her ex-husband, "but I don't want you to be happy either"), not even Gail Sheehy, author of a sympathetic newspaper series that portrayed Cunningham as the one thing she surely is not: a feminist martyr. Mary Cunningham doesn't even let her own sister off the hook. "She wasn't about to be close to me," Cunningham writes bitterly of her sister. "I was her annoying, freckle-faced little strawberry-blond-haired sister whom everybody thought was 'so good.' " If nothing else, *Powerplay* is a remarkable display of raw revenge.

AH, BUT IT'S so much else. It is a business primer. Or rather, it's a what's-wrong-with-business primer. Mary Cunningham dots her book with all the right Harvard Business School buzzwords—P/E ratios and R.O.I.'s and market shares—but nowhere in her autobiography does she show anything approaching genuine business savvy. What she is instead is a classic American paper-shuffler, and by God, proud to be one. She lusts for the chance to devise strategy. She longs to write position papers. She gets weak-kneed at the thought of adding another impressive title to her résumé. Her mentor Agee, meanwhile, represents another classic type inhabiting the modern corporation: the assets manager. Bill Agee is a quarterly reports kind of guy, whose main concern is short-term profits rather than the long-term health of his company. When faced with a money-losing division, Agee's preferred solution is to sell the division before its problems become too well known and let the new owners worry about it. Like Cunningham, he seems more comfortable with paper than with people. Is it any wonder that when Agee (with Mary Cunningham at his side) attempted his now infamous takeover of Martin Marietta—a business ploy requiring above all else a sophisticated understanding of human motives and foibles—it was Bendix that was devoured instead? I scarcely need add that none of this is stated by Mary Cunningham in quite the way I've



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put it here. But that's another thing about this book: it is one of the all-time great between-the-lines reads.

Finally, *Powerplay* is one of the funniest books I've read in a long time. The humor is unintentional, of course, and I suppose it's uncharitable of me to laugh at the misfortune of others. But, my goodness, this is a woman who compares herself to saints—*favorably*! ("Which of the saints, I wondered, had ever lived through a mass media event? Which of the saints had been the victim of a corporate power play?") No one involved in the publishing of this book seems to have had the nerve to tell Cunningham how deeply foolish such self-pitying passages would make her look. In any case, it is precisely these rib-tickling bits, found on practically every page, that push *Powerplay* from the camp of autobiography to the camp of, well, camp. What we're really dealing with here is the Mommy Dearest of the corporate set, with Mary Cunningham in the role of lead vamp. The movie is going to make a bundle.

MARY DEAREST opens in June of 1979, at a time when our heroine has just turned down thirty-two job offers from "investment banking firms, management consulting firms, and Fortune 500 companies" to sign up as William Agee's executive assistant at Bendix. How can we describe her in this opening scene? Let's let Mary describe herself: "I was a 28-year-old female, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Wellesley, with an M.B.A. from Harvard. I was also young, attractive, Catholic and married to a black." And Agee? Agee is the wunderkind (as Cunningham tells us ad nauseum), the quintessential product of the meritocracy. Born of middle-class Idaho parents, Agee starred at Harvard Business School, and then joined Boise Cascade, where he was "mentored" (his word) by the chairman of the company. Naturally, he rose quickly through the ranks, becoming chief financial officer before he was 30. Naturally, he nimbly jumped to Bendix just before the roof fell in at Boise Cascade. Once at Bendix, he assiduously sucked up to then-chairman Michael Blumenthal, thus nicely positioning himself as the logical successor. When Blumenthal moved to Washington in 1977, Agee became the new chairman of the board. He was 38 years old.

Agee wants to show Mary Dearest that the meritocracy can work for her too. He wants to "mentor" her. He wants her to be "credentialed." When she interviews for the job—Did I forget to say that she was handpicked by a former Harvard professor who had touted her to Agee?—Agee dazzles her with the breathtaking depth of his questions. "He asked me if I thought that as a result of the sixties my generation was any more honest than earlier ones." He wants, he says, an assistant who won't be a yes-man. What he never mentions—nor does she, for that matter—is that before Mary Cunningham arrived at Bendix, Agee always seemed to like having yes-men around. Once he ordered his staff to come up with a cost-benefit analysis to prove that he saved the company money every time he took a helicopter to the Detroit airport instead of driving there like everybody else. When they couldn't do it after three or four tries, he scrapped the study.

(For this tidbit, and for much of the other contrary information contained herein, I'm indebted to Allan Sloan, author of *Three Plus One Equals Billions*, an account of the Bendix/Martin Marietta takeover war. Sloan has done a credible, workmanlike job of explaining one of the most complicated, messiest merger battles in corporate history. As an antidote to Cunningham's puffery, Sloan's book, first published last year and recently reissued in paperback, is invaluable.)

Fast forward: After a year as Agee's executive assistant, Mary Dearest is promoted to Vice President for Corporate and Public Affairs. She had wanted to be head of strategic planning, but her mentor knows the timing isn't right. "I want you to do strategy," he tells his protégé. "But first you need to be credentialed." At any rate, it has been a difficult year. The men under Agee don't like her. The women at Bendix gossip about her in the ladies' room. According to Mary, this is because she is young, effective, etc., etc. According to Sloan, it is because "Mary Cunningham, intentionally or not, gave various people at Bendix the idea that she was indeed intimate with Bill Agee. . . ." In conversations with her colleagues, she would offhandedly mention how "Bill and I were talking about the industrial group last night." Once, reports Sloan, she arranged a small birthday party for Agee, for which each of the guests was asked to compose an original poem. Mary's poem went something like this: "In June it will be a year/Since I've been here/And if nothing happens/I'll


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be gone." Luckily, the meritocracy intervenes, and Mary gets her promotion.

"As the new vice president," she writes, "one of my first tasks was to reorganize the department." But she's up to the task. "I changed around a few titles and lines of command and had things running smoothly by July." In the nick of time, too, because Mary Dearest doesn't have much time to spend on public relations. In her view, that's just so much fluff anyway—woman's work, she calls it. Our Mary has more important things on her mind. Agee names her to head up a group studying the company's money-losing brake division. This does not go over well with the chief of the division, who has the temerity to complain—can you imagine this?—that Mary doesn't know anything about brakes. Obviously, this man has never attended Harvard Business School. Mary, steeped in the logic of business school, makes her tough-minded recommendation: sell. Agee calls her work "the finest internal consulting job performed at Bendix."

UNBEKNOWNST to anyone at Bendix, including the strategic planning department, selling the brake division is part of a master plan Agee and Cunningham have devised. Yes, they have a dream, a dream that doesn't include brakes or auto parts or other out-of-fashion businesses. Frankly, after you've been to Harvard Business School manufacturing brakes doesn't have much allure. They want their beloved Bendix to be a hot high-tech company. Quietly they have devised The Strategy, and it has become their holy grail. They have long, seductive talks about which divisions to sell, and which high-tech companies they might acquire. To this day, no one at Bendix has ever seen anything in writing about this bold new strategy, but Mary knows it existed. After all, she wrote it just a few short months after becoming Agee's executive assistant. It took all of twenty pages. After reading it, Agee said, "Mary, that's our strategy."

But by now it's August. By now, Mary has been spotted holding hands with her mentor at the Republican convention, and has co-hosted parties with him for Republican bigwigs (and, according to Sloan, promoted him as a potential Vice-Presidential candidate). By now, Bill Agee has left his wife and moved in across the hall from her. But Mary knows these are not the real reasons there are storm clouds on the horizon. "The air was steamy," she writes. "Prime time for a scandal."

At this point, Sloan's version of events depart so radically from Mary's that I can't even begin to try to reconcile the two. Suffice it to say that Sloan believes that the alleged affair became a public issue only because of an enormous public relations gaffe orchestrated by Agee and Cunningham, and that it stayed alive as a newspaper story only because the two of them kept fanning the flames. Every time it was about to die, Mary and Bill would grant another interview to a reporter they had conned—Gail Sheehy, Robert Sam Anson—and discuss once again their crucifixion by the press. Sloan's theory is that they were addicted to their own press clippings. It has the ring of truth.

But what the heck. The version presented by Mary Dearest has so much more . . . movie potential. The story has everything (agents take note) "power, sex, divorce, money." It begins that steamy August with anonymous letters to the board of directors. The jellyfish on the board don't know what to do. They call in Agee and he assures them the rumors aren't true. Then, Blumenthal, who despises Agee because he was never invited to join the Bendix board after leaving the government, starts spreading the word that she's a tramp. The rumors start up again. The board waffles, with several of the more spineless suggesting that she leave the company. Mary is hurt and angry; she lashes out at her unknown accusers ("the pigs, the slime," etc., etc.). She begins losing that happy-go-lucky perspective she used to have. Why, when Agee finally names her head of strategic planning, she doesn't even want to celebrate. "Advancements in my career left me feeling unmoved." Can there be anything more tragic than that?

Actually, there can be. Reporters can latch onto the story. Once that happens, well, you've seen *Absence of Malice*, haven't you? On Wednesday, Sep-

## DRESSES

On wire hangers, on iron shoulders,
the dresses float in limbo,

flat-chested spinsters who will
not dance. It is night,

the hands of the clock circle
their twelve black mountains,

upstairs the children are dreaming,
and over his red and black inks

the father figures the books,
the store as dark

as the inside of the safe.
Blouses like airy armor, trousers

that marched off the cutting table
through the needle's eye.

Dresses, it is your nature
to be possessed. With feverish hands,

your jailer will free you, undo
the two pearl buttons on your cuff

while her lover hitches up your skirt,
his rough wool against your silk . . .

eventually those caresses will wear
you away. One day you will be

the crushed body in the ragbag,
the purple in the pauper's closet,

the hand-me-down passed from one sister
to another in a distant state.

Your pockets will fill with her
perfume, ticket-stubs, loose tobacco,

the telegram that changes everything
the moment it is read, and memory

makes you too painful to wear.
Houndstooth, black-watch plaid,

mauve, teal, hunter-green—shades
flaring and dying with the season.

Except for the mannequins heaped
in the cellar under the store:

rashes of plaster dust
cover the gash where the wrist



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tember 24, in front of hundreds of Bendix employees, Agee announced that Mary Cunningham had been promoted to head of strategic planning. Then he made the public relations faux pas of the year: "I've been told by many people that Mary Cunningham's rise in this company . . . has something to do with a personal relationship that we have," Agee said. "But her rapid promotions are totally justified. It is based solely on excellent performance. . . . At the same time, I tell you it is true that we are very, very close friends, and she's a very close friend of my family." There was a reporter in the room that day from the *Detroit Free Press*. Immediately after the speech this "short, pudgy" man rushed up to her and began interrogating her. "I don't have to carry this conversation any further," says Mary. "It doesn't matter," replies the ogre, "I've got my story."

Oh, boy. You can guess the rest. The lurid headlines. The paparazzi. The callous hordes of reporters dogging her every step. "I don't understand how the press can do something like this," laments the former head of corporate and public affairs. "Aren't there *rules*?" Now, there is real pressure from the board for her to resign. There are anguished corporate meetings at the Waldorf. (Anguished corporate meetings are always held at the Waldorf.) Mary Dearest thinks about suing Bendix, but then she comes to her senses: "Sue the company whose dramatic blueprint for change I'd help write?" She shudders at the thought. Finally, a settlement is negotiated. She is to receive $120,000 in severance. In tears, she looks over the documents. "And you understand that if you sign this, you will be giving up your right to sue Bendix?" says one of the lawyers in the room. (Agee himself has taken a hike.) Poor, naïve Mary wipes a tear from her eye and replies: "Only for things they've done in the past, not for any future defamation . . . Is that right?" That's our gal!

Abandoned by her mentor, cut off from her company, Mary wanders the streets of New York (photographers in tow, of course). It is a desperate time. "I stayed at the Waldorf," she writes despairingly, "I had no other place to go." She thinks about having a lobotomy. (So help me.) She wonders if any of the saints ever had it so bad.

BUT SOON, just when she thinks she's reached bottom, the heavens open and the sun comes out. Bill Agee comes back into her life. He has gone to his private Idaho hideaway, stricken with mononucleosis, and waiting out the six weeks necessary to finalize his divorce. He asks Mary Dearest to come out there with him, to nurse him back to health. She thinks about it for two, three, four seconds, and decides yes, she'll do it. Naturally, this time there's magic in the air. He explains why he had to stay at Bendix while she was cut adrift. He did it for "the sake of the strategy." She forgives him. Indeed, now they find they can spend hours at a time without ever once mentioning the strategy. Surely, this is the essence of love. One day it happens: they kiss. "How natural and good it felt," she writes. That night, of course, they sleep in separate bedrooms. Later, after Bill has recovered, he sets up a corporate office in New York, so that he can be closer to her. (She has landed at Seagram's as a wine strategist.) Soon, they decide to wed. "I think most women planning a wedding wonder if their hair will look nice. . . . My biggest concern was whether the press would be there." The day before the ceremony, she walks into the chapel, and who should she see but Mother Theresa! "The coincidence was too much," writes Mary Dearest. "How many times had my life almost taken her path." Agee and Cunningham are married in San Francisco, sans reporters, and then stroll, hand in hand, straight into the buzz saw of Martin Marietta.

If you really want to know what happened in the Bendix/Martin Marietta battle, I refer you to Sloan's book. He puts most of the blame for the fiasco—as you'll recall, at one point, the two companies owned a majority of each other's stock—squarely on Agee. "Bendix," he concludes (correctly, in my view) "did not behave rationally." What you'll get from Cunningham's book, besides the same kind of fairy-tale plot line, is a very strong sense that these were two people in way over their

screws into the arm,
where the black necklace scars

the throat; modestly covers,
like talcum, the chipped torsos,

bald heads, bald crotches,
and around each beautiful eye,

the corona of ten spiked lashes.
In the morning, the older daughter

descends the fourteen stairs
to the store and tries on

the frothy white organza strapless,
dragging its hem like a tide

across the sitting room floor;
and there you are in the mirror,

up to your old tricks.
She'll curtsy for her adoring father,

while her mother—
mouth bristling with straight pins—

kneels at her feet. The cash register
resumes its noisy music, browsers

breeze in and out of the swinging
door. Sooner or later, each of you

will attract your customer.
Not on your own volition will you

enter the blazing street and pass
the sister whose smooth back

you pressed against so long ago.
Not on your own volition

will you dance at a daughter's wedding,
dance unwearying until dawn

with energies not your own.
Nor for beauty's sake alone will you

be chosen from among all the others,
when, in severe folds, you will outwear

the body that entered your body willingly
once, and lost herself there.

JANE SHORE



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heads. Mary will tell you that she was shocked—shocked!—that Martin Marietta didn't just roll over and play dead when Bendix announced its tender offer. After all, the numbers said the two companies would be a good match. The paperwork was all in order. What baffles her to this day is that the people at Martin Marietta decided to fight back. That's not the way it happens in the textbooks.

But of course that is the way it happens in real life. People don't always act the way the textbooks say they should. They get mad. They want to keep their jobs. They want to run their own companies. The people who are good at the merger game understand this, and most of them are instinctive amateur psychologists. Not Agee and Cunningham. In an interview with Robert Sam Anson, Cunningham referred to her advice to Agee during that struggle as "decision tree analysis." *Decision tree analysis*? Is this on the level? That may work on a Harvard Business School case study, but when you haven't had any sleep for three days, and someone else is about to buy 51 percent of your stock, and the courts have turned down your desperate request for a temporary injunction, decision tree analysis isn't going to do you a whole lot of good. To be blunt, in Cunningham's own book, she and her husband come off as lightweights operating in a heavyweight world.

AND YET, what Mary Cunningham seems to want more than anything else is to be considered a heavyweight, to be taken seriously as a businesswoman. Right now, she is touring the country to promote this book, promulgating the fiction that her only problem was that she was too good—too smart, too young, too pretty—and therefore an untenable threat to the office chauvinists. It won't wash. The evidence presented in *Powerplay* suggests that as a businesswoman, she was playing in the big leagues before she belonged there. She was "credentialed" all right, but what did she know about business? As for the rest of it, the pigs and the slime, Mary Cunningham, to use the hoary old sexist phrase, got what she deserved. She was horribly indiscreet. She lorded her closeness to the boss over her colleagues. She promoted herself at the expense of others. And if the people at Bendix hated her and Agee, as she suggests, they had good reason. They were destroying the company. Surely there are women out there whose careers have been maliciously sacrificed on the altar of office gossip, but it's a real stretcher to say that Mary Cunningham is among them.

Now all Mary Dearest says she wants is some of her privacy back. She says it in her book, and I heard her say it the other day on "Donahue." Yes, Mary Cunningham just wants to live a quiet, uneventful life of marital bliss with her husband Bill Agee. Well, sure. Why not? So why do I keep thinking that as soon as the publicity tour is over, she's going to start peddling the movie rights?

**JOSEPH NOCERA**

Joseph Nocera is an associate editor of *Texas Monthly*.

# DIGGING THE PIT

## Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941-1960 by Ronald H. Spector

(Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 391 pp., $18, $11 paper)

This is the first in a series of volumes, collectively titled *The U.S. Army in Vietnam*, to be published by the Army's Center of Military History. The aim of the series is to provide a comprehensive history of the Army's long and tortuous experience in that unfortunate country. Future volumes will recount combat operations, as well as the Army's role in pacification, logistics, communications, engineer operations, medical support, and training. There will also be a volume that deals with the Army's relations with the media, which some Army officers, including General William C. Westmoreland, still blame for America's debacle in Vietnam.

*Advice and Support*, written by the Center's Ronald H. Spector, is more than a simple narrative of the Army's ultimately fruitless attempts during the 1940s and 1950s to fashion a viable anti-Communist battlefield competitor to Ho Chi Minh's superbly organized and led Viet Minh guerrillas, the precursors of the Viet Cong and regular North Vietnamese Army. *Advice and Support* is also an unflinching indictment of the American military. Spector documents its fundamental misperception of the nature of the "Communist threat" in Vietnam; its unshakable faith in the relevance of its own administrative and firepower-heavy style of warfare against an elusive enemy that offered few worthwhile targets; and its persistent conviction that the miserable performance of South Vietnam's military forces was ascribable mainly to lack of sufficient training and "gung ho" spirit.

Above all Spector emphasizes the Pentagon's arrogant disregard of the lessons to be drawn from the French defeat in Indochina in 1954, a defeat regarded as perplexing but irrelevant. No less a gifted practitioner of war than General Douglas MacArthur observed to President Truman, some four years before the fall of Dien Bien Phu, that "the French have 150,000 of their best troops there with an officer of the highest reputation in command. . . . I cannot understand why they cannot clean it up. They should be able to do so in four months. . . ." Marine General Graves B. Erskine, who headed a U.S. military survey team sent to Vietnam in 1950, believed, as did many U.S. military men, that there was little the French could teach the Americans. The French, he commented, "haven't won a war since Napoleon, so why listen to a bunch of second-raters when they are losing this war." One wonders, in the wake of America's own defeat in Vietnam and subsequent botched military ventures in Iran and Lebanon, what, if anything, Americans can teach others about the art of war.

Notable both for its sensitivity to the relation of military action to political objectives and for its willingness to examine the U.S. military's professional performance in Vietnam within the framework of political constraints imposed by American civil authority (rath-



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er than simply bemoaning those constraints), this book joins a small but growing body of self-critical literature written by professional military men or, as in Spector's case, on behalf of the military. Implicit in Spector's candid and thoroughly researched work is an acceptance of the central conclusion drawn by Colonel Harry G. Summers Jr., in his ground-breaking 1982 book, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*—namely, that "Our problem [in Vietnam] was not so much political interference as it was the lack of a coherent military strategy—a lack for which our military leaders share a large burden of responsibility."

Not only did the Army's advisory program in Vietnam fail in the 1950s, thus encouraging the entry of U.S. ground combat troops in the following decade; it failed for many of the same reasons that engendered the subsequent defeat of American arms in Vietnam. Prominent among those reasons was a policy of constant rotation of U.S. officers and men to and from Vietnam. This precluded consistency of advice to the South Vietnamese and later endangered the battlefield cohesion of U.S. combat units.

THE IRONY is that although it ended up paying the lion's share of the butcher's bill incurred by the Pentagon during the Vietnam War, the Army, at least in the critical decade of the 1950s, was the most reluctant of all the services to see U.S. military power committed directly to Vietnam. That reluctance was born of a remarkably prescient estimation of what it would take to prevail in Vietnam as well as a recognition that ultimate success depended on effective political and economic reform in the South.

As early as 1950 the Army staff's Plans and Operations Division questioned whether a French defeat in Indochina would seriously imperil U.S. security interests. Three years later, as the French began to falter, Army planners concluded that it would take no fewer than eight U.S. divisions (including one Marine division) at least five to eight years to beat the Viet Minh in the event of a French withdrawal, and accordingly they questioned "the importance of Indochina and Southeast Asia in relation to the possible cost of saving it." In 1954, the Viet Minh ring around Dien Bien Phu began to tighten, increasing the pressures upon the Eisenhower Administration to intervene. Army Chief of Staff Matthew Ridgway (who remains the last of that service's living great warriors—a man who, in sharp contrast to the careerists and managerial technocrats who largely run the Army today, never confused leadership and management, tactics and technology, or effectiveness and efficiency) fought almost single-handedly with the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff against intervention. He rejected the predictable opinions of his Navy and Air Force colleagues that naval and air power alone could do the trick. Ridgway warned, instead that the use of American forces in Vietnam "would constitute a dangerous strategic diversion of limited U.S. military capabilities and would commit our armed forces in a nondecisive theater to the attainment of nondecisive local objectives," a judgment luckily shared by President Eisenhower.

IT IS perhaps unfortunate that Ridgway could not have continued to serve as a member of the Joint Chiefs for another fifteen years. Still, it can be argued that the Army's failure to create an effective South Vietnamese military counterweight to the Viet Minh, coupled with the political refusal of the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations to accept a Communist South Vietnam, made direct U.S. military intervention in Vietnam more or less inevitable.

To be sure, U.S. Army advisers had their work cut out for them. As Spector correctly observes, the South Vietnamese Army in the latter half of the 1950s suffered from profound institutional deficiencies, including "divided authority," "inadequate technical competence," "lack of specific training for guerrilla warfare," "rampant politicization of the officer corps," and an "absence of unifying national spirit, motivation, or patriotism on the part of most Vietnamese soldiers." These problems persisted in the face of repeated U.S. efforts to eliminate them. Ultimately they doomed the Nixon Administration's effort to "re-Vietnamize" the war (without losing it) in the late 1960s and early 1970s. But Spector does not stop there. He goes on to argue, again correctly, that "the very organization, composition, and outlook of the [U.S.] Military Assistance Advisory Group ensured that the American advisers would remain either unaware of these inherent deficiencies or powerless to change them." He cites, among other things, the short-tour system that denied advisers enough time "to win the confidence of their Vietnamese counterparts and influence them to take needed measures to increase the effectiveness of their units" and a "dogged 'Can Do' attitude" of U.S. advisers "who tended to see all faults in the [South Vietnamese army] as correctable [and] all failures as temporary . . ."

Worse still, knowing little of armies other than their own, and even less about the "strange" operational environment in Vietnam, the Americans sought to create in South Vietnam an


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army that had little bearing on the threat at hand. Indigenous Communist guerrillas represented by far the greater threat to South Vietnam than an overt, large-scale, Korean-style invasion from the North. Yet U.S. advisers concentrated on building an American-style, road-bound, firepower-heavy army geared to resist attack from the North because, as Spector writes, "in the 1950s, in contrast to the 1960s, there was little interest in, or knowledge of, counterinsurgency warfare within the U.S. armed forces."

The only significant weakness of *Advice and Support* lies not in the book itself but in the probability that few American military men will bother to read it. It is first and foremost a book of lessons. As such, its relevance ought to be self-evident to an institution currently engaged in advising and supporting numerous Third World armies, some of which—notably the Salvadoran Army—face challenges similar in key respects to those that ultimately defeated both the United States and its allies in Vietnam.

Yet the American officer corps, like the society from which it is drawn, is not noted for its attention to history, despite Clausewitz's observation that the study of war is first and foremost the study of history. Indeed, few American officers have the time to read about the object of their profession. Since the transformation of the U.S. military into simply another vast government bureaucracy in the 1960s, the officer corps has been inundated with exhausting paperwork characteristic of all bureaucracies. There is, too, the question of inclination, even were time to read available. The substitution of managerial-technocratic values for traditional warrior values that accompanied the bureaucratization of the military has discouraged an appreciation—which can be gained only through the knowledge of war's history—of the degree to which war's outcome is still decided, despite revolutionary advances in technology, by such intangibles as leadership, strategy, tactics, training, combat experience, morale, unit cohesion, and what Frederick the Great called "His Sacred Majesty Chance." "Bookish" officers are clearly oddballs in a military establishment persuaded that war is, or at least can be made, a scientific enterprise whose success depends mainly on marshaling the proper technology and managerial prowess.

*Advice and Support* should be required reading in the Army, and certainly for every U.S. military adviser in Central America. History unread is history repeated.

**JEFFREY RECORD**

Jeffrey Record is an adjunct professor of military history at Georgetown University.

## THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

*Following is a list of books* TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

***Dawn to the West*** by Donald Keene (Holt, Rinehart, & Winston) 2000 pages exhaustively, informatively, covering the modern literature of Japan. (Reviewed 6/25/84).

***An American Procession*** by Alfred Kazin (Knopf). The brilliant culmination of a critic's lifelong look at American literature. (6/18/84)

***The Making of America's Soviet Policy*** edited by Joseph S. Nye Jr. (Yale University Press). Clear-eyed analyses of, and prescriptions for, the rocky relations between the superpowers. (6/18/84)

***The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion*** by Leo Steinberg (Pantheon/October Book). An original study of a delicate subject. (6/11/84)

***War in Val D'Orcia: An Italian War Diary 1943-44*** by Iris Origo (David R. Godine). One woman's day-by-day record of life in an Italy torn by war. (6/4/84)

***Notes From a Child of Paradise*** by Alfred Corn (Viking/Penguin). A long poem about love and hope in the 1960s. (6/11/84)

***Children in Exile: Poems 1968-1984*** by James Fenton (Random House). A British poet's evocations of Germany, Cambodia, and other nightmares. (5/14/84)

***Three Novels: The Blackmailer; A Man of Power; The Great Occasion*** by Isabel Colegate (Viking). Portraits of self-made men, their personal pains and social mistakes. (5/28/84)

***The Truth That Killed*** by Georgi Markov (Ticknor & Fields). Inside Bulgaria: a posthumous memoir by the émigré who was killed by an umbrella. (5/14/84)

***Jinnah of Pakistan*** by Stanley Wolpert (Oxford University Press). A major biography of the subcontinent's lesser known hero. (5/7/84)

# BRIEF REVIEW

## Judgment in Berlin by Herbert J. Stern

(Universe Books, 384 pp., $14.95)

Even a committed opponent of Communist tyranny may regret the United States' renunciation, in connection with Nicaragua, of its submission to the jurisdiction of the World Court. Surely the claim of international law to be anything more than a pious wish was thereby weakened. It is precisely because the other side shamelessly prostitutes international law to the service of its ambitions that our side should take care not to disavow the thankless fidelity international law demands of us.

The American move, however, is a piece of lawyering that bespeaks a lack of professional competence in those responsible for it. "Don't renounce the Court's jurisdiction," any astute lawyer would have told the State Department. "Embrace it, and argue that the Court can't decide the merits of Nicaragua's claim because Nicaragua has itself never properly acceded to World Court jurisdiction; or that Nicaragua's claim must be denied because, as a subverter of neighboring states, Nicaragua comes to judgment with unclean hands; or that, under the Communist nations' own view of appropriate international practice, the United States has the right to mine Nicaraguan waters. A powerful case can be made on any of these points, and the outcome will almost certainly be either a decision in our favor or a refusal by the Court to decide at all." International law, this wise lawyer



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would continue, is nothing to be afraid of; see it rather as the handmaiden of policy, a supremely flexible instrument for vindicating the nation's purposes.

Any doubt that this is indeed the potential of international law will be laid to rest in reading *Judgment in Berlin* by Herbert J. Stern, a United States District Judge in Newark, New Jersey. Judge Stern is among the very few federal judges ever to write a book about one of their own cases. He tells two stories, both thrillers. The first is a tale of daring deeds by East Berliners (and the child of one of them) desperate for freedom. They plan their escape to the West; they fail; they try again; this time they succeed, commandeering a Polish airliner on its approach into the East Berlin airport and hijacking it over the wall to a landing in West Berlin.

THE OTHER story, perhaps less action-packed and suspenseful than the first, is just as absorbing. A treaty signed by most of the world's nations, including the Soviet Union, the United States, and West Germany, requires the receiving country to prosecute airplane hijackers or send them home for trial. This is international law without a doubt, but West Germany refused to obey it. To West Germany, these hijackers were citizens coming home, not criminals—and that was clear. Whereupon the United States stood up for international law: it had to be respected in the case of these hijackers, as in other cases less appealing. If West Germany would not prosecute, the United States would.

The question was how to arrange matters, and to that question clever lawyers supplied a brilliant answer. Having been excluded from the peace treaty that ended World War II, Berlin was still occupied territory. The United States, therefore, as an occupying power, could convene an occupation court to try the hijackers. What's more, the occupation court could be run by a genuine federal judge.

Enter Judge Stern, chosen for the job at the insistence of the State Department, from whom the State Department now learned a lesson in what law is all about. Judge Stern's view was that, in the manner of American judges generally, he would rule as he thought right, and the right way to rule was in accordance with the United States Constitution. Thus it came about that the trial in West Berlin of East German hijackers was conducted pretty much as it would have been in any federal courthouse in any of the fifty states. There were prosecutors and defense counsel—American lawyers assigned by Judge Stern to represent the accused. There was a motion to suppress evidence on the ground that it had been obtained in violation of the defendants' rights. And, astonishingly, there was a jury of West Berliners to decide the fate of these citizens of the other Germany who had wanted only to come live among them.

The central thread of this second story is the conflict between the State Department, which appeared to want only one thing—to mollify the Russians by mounting a swift trial culminating in certain conviction—and Judge Stern, who perceived his responsibilities to lie elsewhere. It was the Judge's pertinacity which eventually prevailed. Law, rather than expedience, controlled the proceedings, with the outcome—not to be revealed here—satisfying everyone except the Russians.

*Judgment in Berlin* illustrates the effectiveness of law, international no less than domestic, as a means to good ends when it is adeptly handled. It is also a gripping adventure story, and as good a book as we've had in a long time about politics in the courtroom. It ought to make a bang-up movie.

**IRVING YOUNGER**

Irving Younger is a lawyer in Washington, D.C.

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**CORRESPONDENCE**, *from page 2*

argued that to deny individuals with low incomes any ability to pledge collateral against credit received could well eliminate their ability to obtain any credit at all.

There is much more to refute in Mr. Pertschuk's account. But let me just remind TNR readers that I am not the only student of regulation who values F.T.C. economists. Here is what another source has to say: "Economists are very good indeed at framing questions that lawyers and consumer advocates have not asked. . . . They ask that question most dreaded of all by the entrepreneurial regulator: 'How secure are you that the world will be a better place for


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your invention than if left alone?' We have learned from [F.T.C. economists] that even where the impulse to regulate springs from deep wells of resentment at corporate abuse or neglect, we can end up punishing not just the miscreants, but their victims, the consumers, upon whom the costs of regulatory compliance are most often loaded."

I wish I could claim to have written that passage, but I can't. Those words were penned in 1982 by Mr. Pertschuk himself in his book *Revolt Against Regulation*. Isn't it strange how one's rhetoric becomes transformed as the political seasons come and go?

WENDY L. GRAMM
*Bureau of Economics*
*Federal Trade Commission*
*Washington, D.C.*

*Mr. Pertschuk replies:*
In all but one of the last six merger and joint venture cases, including the big oil mergers, the economists recommended no action or minor limitations that allowed the transactions to be consummated. The claim that the commission has lost 60 percent of its cases since 1977 (one used frequently by F.T.C. Chairman Miller, too) is more than a little deceptive. First, the statement applies only to the 20 percent of the commission's cases which ended up being reviewed by the courts, the closest and most difficult of all those brought. Second, all but three of the cases lost in the courts of appeals *after* 1977 were brought *before* 1977 and before the F.T.C. began improving its case selection and anti-trust analysis. As for the credit rule, I'm glad Chairman Miller and Commissioner Douglas voted for it, after minor amendments and after it was clear the other three commissioners were going to. But they, along with the economists, criticized it relentlessly before they did.

## FOUR MORE DRINKS

*To the editors*:
Talk about damning with faint praise! I can't imagine that your "Why I'm For . . ." cover story (TNR, June 4) did much for the morale of either Gary Hart or Fritz Mondale. First you have Stephen King explain that he supports Mr. Hart because he believes that Mr. Hart believes that he can beat President Reagan. Why? Because he watched Mr. Hart's face carefully when the Senator said he'd whip the Gipper, and he felt "the man's engine running." Convincing, huh? Mr. King has apparently written so many books about clairvoyants that he's "shining" a bit himself these days. But just in case Mr. King's built-in Ouija board is wrong on this one, he assures us that he'll support Mr. Mondale in November, just as he would a "dead dog in the street."

Not to be outdone by some young whippersnapper of a horror writer, James Michener follows with his ringing endorsement of Walter Mondale as the man who can lose most gracefully to President Reagan. Just the quality we're looking for in a candidate. But wait, there's an even more compelling reason why we should all start thumping the tubs for the Hube's protégé. If Mr. Mondale is denied the nomination, says Mr. Michener, it will embarrass every party hack in the country, and we can't have that, can we?

As I sat in my favorite bar reading these stirring plugs for my party's candidates, I happened to overhear a young Reaganite nearby, crowing about her hero's electoral prospects. "Landslide, baby!" she said over and over. "We're gonna take all fifty states! No more 'bipartisan compromises' then, man. We're gonna have four years to kick ass." I had four more drinks, pronto. One for each year of our glorious future. I'm thinking about sending you the tab.

KEVIN A. JENSEN
*Atlanta, Georgia*

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**TRB**, *from page 4*

especially for layers of administration, as the government gives money to the Endowment, which gives it to a Foundation to give it to an Institute to fund a fellowship program. Jobs for the boys, as Mayor Daley used to say.

The fact that most of its money will be squandered is only one flaw in the Endowment. The other flaw is conceptual. It's the money that's not squandered. Promoting American values in the world is a perfectly legitimate function of government, but we already have several government agencies doing that, such as the U.S.I.A. More power to them. The hypocritical, squeamish, and ultimately futile idea behind the Endowment is that the United States government can finance certain activities and yet somehow not be associated with them. The Panama episode shows that this won't work. Nor should it.

In using government funds to meddle in a foreign election, the A.F.L.-C.I.O. was not exceeding its mandate. It was doing exactly what Endowment grantees are supposed to do. Whether President Reagan is aware of it or not, the West German program he admires so much, the one the Endowment is modeled on, is itself modeled on the efforts of the Socialist International to encourage mutual support among social democratic parties around the world. The inherent assumption is that class interests cross national boundaries.

The Chamber of Commerce frankly says it intends to use its government money to "encourage business participation in the political process" in the Third World. The Republican Party plans "open political assistance" to "centrist and conservative political parties [which] are competing against parties of the left." And why not? They're entitled to pursue their class interests too. As a journalist, I anticipate an unending bounty of embarrassing revelations if the Endowment is revived. As a taxpayer, though, I wonder by what logic I am obligated to help fund the business establishment's choice in foreign elections. And if this is our new theory of democracy, shouldn't we repeal our own law against political contributions from foreigners so that other governments can finance candidates in American elections? Or is the theory actually that we can do unto other people's elections, but they can't do unto ours?

An operation that is not accountable to the democratic process here and contemptuous of the democratic process abroad is no way to promote democracy. This is not naïve fastidiousness. It's practical sense. Of course there are foreign elections where democratic forces are contending against undemocratic elements which hope to make this election the last one. If the anti-democrats are getting help from outside, a good case can be made that the democrats—*all* the democrats—should get help too. But let the case be made explicitly and the funds be paid directly, if Congress is convinced. Democracy is, among other things, a good reality test. In general, let's show our real respect for democracy by keeping our hands off.



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# WASHINGTON DIARIST

## *Yuppie Secrets*

**OVER THE PAST YEAR,** THE NEW REPUBLIC's good offices have been used, off and on, by editors, writers, and business types who were planning a new weekly newspaper for Washington. Often when editorial staff members tried to repair to the conference room for a meeting, they would find the big table in the center of the room covered with spread sheets and sharp pencils and other impedimenta of newspaper research. To tell the truth, not all of this mess was caused by outsiders. Some of us at TNR (including, notably, me) have been moonlighting, paying a little less attention to this magazine than we should. Eventually the new paper, which is called *The Washington Weekly* (well, *you* think of a better name; we couldn't), moved into offices of its own, in a townhouse on P Street, about four blocks from TNR. And finally, on June 12, *The Weekly*'s first issue was published. It's sort of a slicked-up version of the *Village Voice* or *The Boston Phoenix*—but without the punk politics. The first press run was modest—27,000 copies, of which about 18,000 went to charter subscribers ($18 a year) and the rest to newsstands in the Washington area. The paper is bright and well-illustrated, and its articles are a mixture of the serious and the light, subjects that we think will appeal to this city's vast yuppie population: problems of divorced fathers who can't see their children, an interview with CBS producer George Crile on the Westmoreland suit, a funny piece about Washington's summer law clerks. There are also movie, theater, restaurant, and music reviews; and items on gaffes in the *Congressional Record*, on Freedom Summer twenty years after, and on how to buy a bike. And the paper is larded with a scarce commodity hereabouts—humor. We have this notion that yuppies secretly want to relax, to stop bragging about twelve-hour days at the office, two-hour workouts in the gym, and shopping safaris for the freshest flounder, the cheapest Betamax, or the most comfortable running shoes.

**YOU'RE PROBABLY WONDERING** about the exact relationship between the paper and TNR. Marty Peretz, the editor-in-chief of this magazine, is one of the owners of *The Weekly*, as are (among others) Mort Zuckerman, chairman of *The Atlantic* and putative owner of *U.S. News and World Report*, and Joan Bingham, a local writer and photographer. I've been serving as acting publisher of *The Weekly* since the project began in August, and Reed Phillips, TNR's associate publisher, and Kris Klasman, our controller, have been working on *The Weekly* as well, with a good deal of kibitzing from the editors, especially Peretz, Hertzberg, and Kinsley. The idea was that once the paper was launched, we would leave it in the capable hands of Ms. Bingham; Jim Rice, the former publisher of *The Washington Monthly* and now *The Weekly*'s general manager; and Jeff Stein, a Washington writer (see "Officer Ed Meese," TNR, October 7, 1981) who was the entrepreneurial spirit behind the new paper and is its editor. But launching a new publication is so much fun that I've found it hard to tear myself away from P Street. I spent most of the weekend there, helping to paste up the first issue. Please pardon the supply-side rhetoric, but I wrote as an introduction to that issue that starting a new newspaper is an act of faith and a speculation. You launch your product into the void and hope that there are people out there who like it and will pay for it.

**I DIDN'T SPEND** the entire weekend at *The Weekly*. I devoted Saturday morning to watching my ten-year-old daughter's soccer team play its final game of the season, a 0-0 tie in 95-degree heat. Soccer is as much a Washington yuppie phenomenon as we hope *The Weekly* will be—or, at any rate, it's a phenomenon among the children of yuppies. Soccer has sophisticated European connotations; it's not rough and tough like football, and it can be played equally well by children of either sex. The perfect sport for the Perrier generation. It also lends itself to tight organization and precise rules, which are obsessions of my neighbors, most of whom are lawyers. In my particular suburb, Montgomery County, Maryland, there's a nonprofit corporation that oversees dozens of teams, managing such details as which team has to bring the nets to the field each week. I used to play soccer myself twenty years ago, but in those days it was an esoteric sport, mainly the province of sissies who weren't man enough for football. Today, it's far bigger in the Washington area than Little League baseball, and parents spend Saturdays watching contests that few of them understand very well—a baffling succession of head shots and corner kicks. My daughter's team is called the Vulcans, and they were a powerhouse this spring. They won five games, tied three, and lost none. Only two goals were scored on them. Best of all, the girls play in an atmosphere of good fellowship with a surprising absence of malice on the field. At least, that's what the parents see on Saturday afternoons. I'm told that the assistant coach has schooled the girls in a secret cheer (only yelled in her V.W. Vanagon on the way to the game) that goes, in part: "Kill, Vulcans, kill!"

**MY ONLY OTHER RESPITE** from *The Washington Weekly* came on Saturday night when my wife and I played unobtrusive chaperones for an end-of-school party that my older daughter, age 11, threw in our backyard. There were hamburgers and root beer and loud music—in other words, déjà vu, a party out of my own past. It made me realize that one secret yuppie vice is the need to impose one's own youth on one's children. Remember the scene in *The Big Chill* where the father teaches his kid '60s songs? I do that too. My children are forced to listen to the local oldies station whenever I'm driving them around in the car. In my endeavor to mold their taste, I am not wholly successful. The music at my daughter's party was by Culture Club, Duran Duran, and Rick Springfield.

**NOT ONLY ARE THERE** yuppie secrets in Washington; there are White House secrets as well. The side of the Reagan residence facing Pennsylvania Avenue has been covered for weeks with canvas, making the whole place look like a work of art by Christo that might be called "Wrapped Executive Mansion." What's going on? Official explanations are innocuous enough, but there's speculation that machine guns or special electronic security devices are being built into the walls. Is this a TNR story? Absolutely not—no major questions of policy or intellect are involved. It looks like a job for *The Washington Weekly*.

**J. K. G.**

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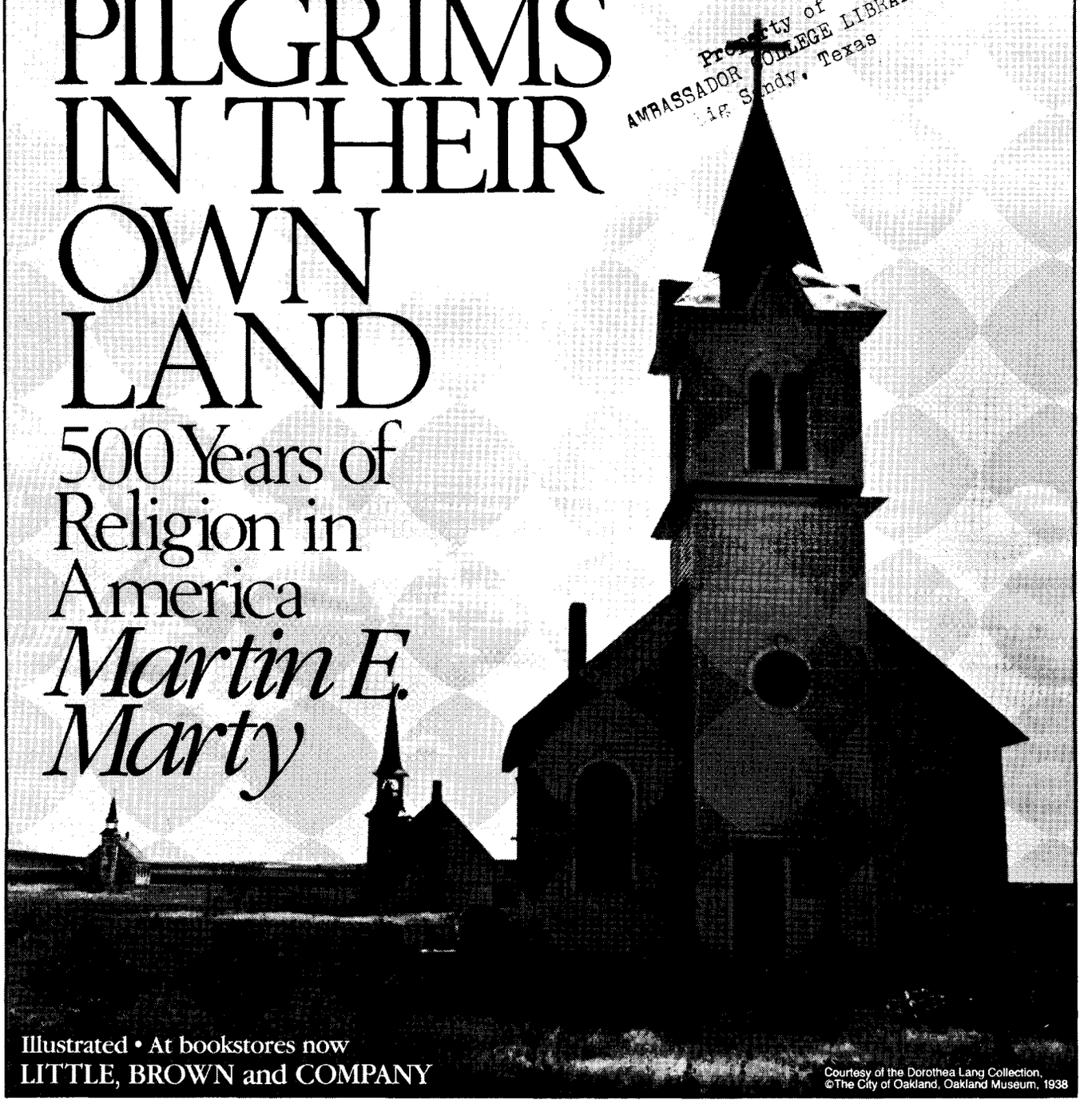

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